

# adoption

opening hearts. changing lives.

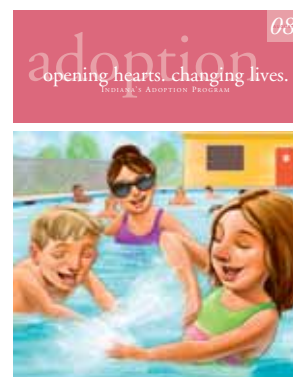
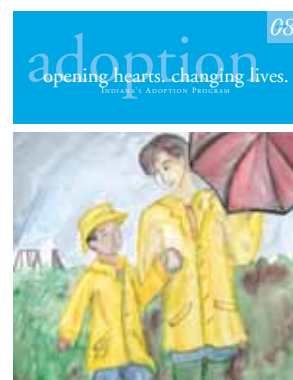
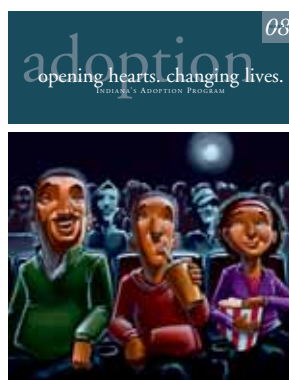
INDIANA'S ADOPTION PROGRAM



Opening hearts. Changing lives. enjoys playing with trains personable teen known to be shy going

## *Indiana's future is in your hands.*

We commemorate this past year of covers for the adoption booklets. The illustrations depicting a year of activities, holidays and events in Indiana families were created by Herron art students and professional illustrators under the guidance of Thrive, Inc. They were created as part of a recruitment initiative for foster and adoptive parents. Many foster parents adopt children they foster and leave the foster parenting system out of necessity. There are also children of all ages and diverse backgrounds in the adoption system. As our communities continue to change, so will the needs of our children.



The Indiana Adoption Program would like to thank Ariel Gruell for the June cover illustration.

to movies gets along well with others going to school responsible

## *Welcome to the Indiana Adoption Program*

The Indiana Adoption Program is a statewide effort to create permanence for children who are wards of the State of Indiana. It is a program of the Indiana Department of Child Services in collaboration with the Indiana Foster Care & Adoption Association.

There are many aspects of adoption and the Indiana Adoption Program is just one of those aspects. We will help you consider some aspects of adoption in this book.

The Picture book is also available on the internet. You can download the book or specific pages at **[www.adoptachild.in.gov](http://www.adoptachild.in.gov)**.

To learn more about Indiana Foster Care and Adoption Association, see us on the web at: [www.ifcaa.org](http://www.ifcaa.org) or call for a brochure: 1-800-468-4228.

To mail correspondence to the Indiana Adoption program send to: The Indiana Adoption program, c/o IFCAA, 509 E. National Ave., Ste. A, Indianapolis, IN 46227.

Protecting our Children,  
Families & Future.

James W. Payne, Director





## Table of Contents

Meet Our Children.....	3
How Do I Start The Adoption Process? .....	4
Common Challenges of Children With Special Needs .....	5
Individual Child Index .....	6
How to Adopt .....	30
Step 1: Educate Yourself about Adoption .....	30
Step 2: Decide What Type of Adoption You Want to Pursue .....	32
Step 3: Investigate Ways to Cover Adoption Expenses .....	32
Step 4: Select an Adoption Agency.....	35
Step 5: Let Your Agency Know You Are Serious about Adopting .....	36
Step 6: Adoption Application.....	36
Step 7: Attend Adoption and Parenting Classes .....	36
Step 8: Begin the Family Preparation Process .....	36
Step 9: Begin Searching for a Child .....	37
Step 10: Considering a Child .....	37
Step 11: Prepare for Your Child's Arrival .....	38
Step 12: The Child is Placed in Your Home .....	39
Step 13: File a Petition to Adopt .....	39
Step 14: Finalize the Adoption .....	39
The Legal Aspects of Adoption.....	40
Adoption Chart .....	41
What is adoption? .....	42
Youth Connections Program.....	44

to movies gets along well with others going to school responsible

# Meet Our Children

In this book you will see many different faces of youth. The words next to their faces only tell a partial story. Their biography is not complete. Any young person's story is worthy of telling you, yet what you read here about them is just a few short sentences.

The paragraphs next to each child are an introduction. Beyond the paragraphs, we want you to know the whole biography of a child when you are considering making a commitment as a parent; however here in this book we balance your need to know with a child's need for privacy and sense of well-being.

Children who have experienced foster care all have one thing in common: they have had to leave their home. And by that very fact alone, their need for healing, stability and nurturing requires attention. Children who have had to endure neglect, abuse, or trauma can face many challenges. Those challenges can range from mild to severe and can also be temporary or permanent.

The challenges our children face will not be detailed in the introductions. Listing a short medical or mental health diagnosis can sometimes be misleading and can breach confidentiality. You can read about some of the challenges that are common to many children in the adoption program in a separate section of this book.

In the adoption program, many of the children are older and may have physical, mental or emotional impairments. Some have brothers and sisters in the program with them and they may need to live together or they may need to keep their essential connection to each other through different living arrangements.

The youth featured in this book are in foster care and they may live with a foster family or they may be living in a group home or other child-caring facility such as a treatment center. Every child needs the love and support of a family. We invite you to learn more about adopting children in the Indiana Adoption Program.

You will see a number next to each child's introduction. Please refer to this number when making an inquiry about them.

## If I inquire about a child, does this mean I will get to adopt this child?

A prospective adoptive parent must have completed the Family Preparation process and be approved to adopt a child introduced in this book. If you are just beginning that process or have not yet begun, a child you see here may be living with a new family before you complete the Family Preparation process.

If you become their adoptive parent, a child's future development, well being, and sense of family and community will rest with you.

Therefore, adoption requires serious considerations.

The child's social worker or adoption team will help determine if you and your family are compatible with the child and there may also be several families that are considering the same child.

## Subscription Information

You can receive a six month subscription to this magazine by mailing a \$15 check along with your name and address to:

IFCAA  
509 E. National Ave., Suite A  
Indianapolis, IN 46227

If you have any questions please call  
1-888-25-ADOPT.

1-888-25-ADOPT

## How Do I Start The Adoption Process?

The Adoption Process for a child who is a ward requires the supervision of a county Office of Family and Children and that is usually the county where the prospective adoptive parent resides. The process begins with Family Preparation and parents are required to attend educational workshops and complete a Family Preparation Assessment, sometimes called a Home Study. You can learn more about the process in another section of this book. Prospective Adoptive parents must be recommended to the Indiana Adoption Program after their Family Preparation is complete and approved.

To begin to inquire about Family Preparation contact the Indiana Adoption Program:

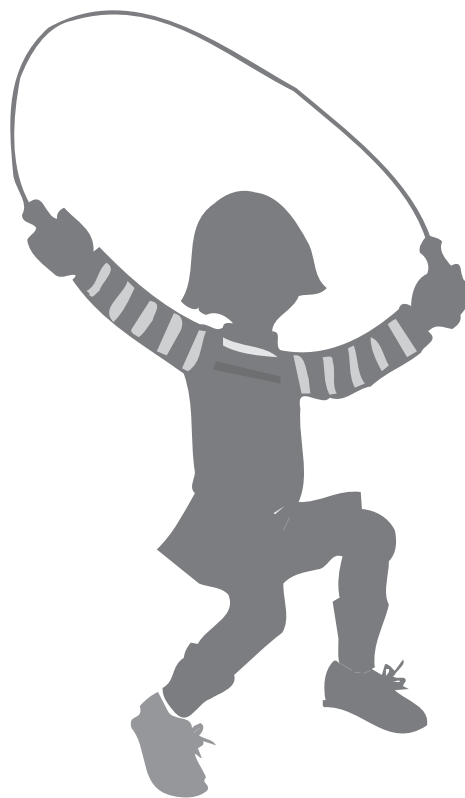
**Call 1-888-25-ADOPT**

**or e-mail at [adoption@iquest.net](mailto:adoption@iquest.net)**

You will be given the contact information of those in your community responsible for helping you with Family Preparation and your contact information will be submitted to your local Training Coordinator and to your local county Department of Child Services. The Training Coordinator will send you a schedule and they may contact you about registering for the educational workshops. You can also choose to contact your community agencies.

If you have an approved Family Preparation Assessment or Home Study from the Indiana Department of Child Services and want more information on a child introduced in the Picture Book, contact the Indiana Adoption Program. You will be given the contact information for the child and your contact information will be submitted to the child's social worker and Special Needs Adoption Specialist.

We encourage you to contact the IAP first in order to ensure that you communicate to the proper individuals responsible for any child featured in this book.



to movies gets along well with others going to school responsible

## Common Challenges of Children With Special Needs

Children in the Indiana Adoption Program are often considered to have "special needs." Special Needs can mean different things to people. The Adoption Program has been referred to as a Special Needs Adoption Program (SNAP) and the regional representative coordinating the adoption process for a child is called a SNAP Specialist.

Special Needs are the unique challenges each child faces and will require parents to assist them in their childhood development and schooling in a knowledgeable way. Special Needs can describe physical disabilities, medical conditions, emotional difficulties and developmental issues.

### Abuse

Many of the children, regardless of their age, in the Indiana Adoption Program have experienced abuse. This can mean physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or any combination of these types of trauma. Abuse generally leaves its mark with behavioral problems, physical impairments and therapeutic needs that require the attention of parents and professionals working together to benefit the child's future development.

### Attachment

This term describes a child's ability to form relationships. Children who have been abused, neglected, or have experienced disruptions in significant relationships may face challenges in creating new relationships.

### Attachment Disorder

An attachment disorder is a condition in which children have difficulty forming loving, lasting close relationships. Attachment disorders vary in severity, but the term is usually reserved for those who show a nearly complete lack of ability to be genuinely affectionate with others. They may seem distant, insincere or uncaring and have difficulty trusting others.

### Attention Deficit Disorder/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADD/ADHD)

ADD/ADHD is a diagnosable, treatable, biologically based disorder. The primary symptoms include some combination of being inattentive and being distracted, being impulsive, and in some children, physical restlessness or hyperactive behavior.

### Developmental Disabilities (DD)

This term describes many conditions that may be mild or severe and generally includes any physical, mental or emotional condition, which will continue to inhibit the normal developmental progress of a child. Many children have educational requirements that must be met through the Special Education process of their school.

A child's challenges can range from mild to severe, and be temporary or permanent. The environment provided in a child's future development, that may include you as their parent, will to a great degree affect the measure of their challenges.

### Drug-Exposed

A child born to a mother who used drugs such as cocaine or certain pharmaceuticals while she was pregnant may have damage to their nervous system. A newborn will appear stiff and rigid and have prolonged crying episodes and be at an increased risk for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Some children will develop behavior and learning difficulties.

### Emotional Disability (ED)

Abuse, trauma and sometimes genetics can result in various degrees of multiple emotional challenges. This term is also used as eligibility criteria for services at school through Special Education under state and federal law.

### Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/Fetal Alcohol Effects (FAS/FAE)

### Alcohol-Related Neurodevelopmental Disorder (ARND)

FAS/FAE is a set of physical, mental and neurobehavioral birth defects associated with alcohol consumption by a child's birth mother during pregnancy. Prenatal alcohol exposure does not always result in FAS—although there is no known safe level of alcohol consumption during pregnancy. Some children affected by alcohol exposure before birth do not have the characteristic facial abnormalities and growth retardation identified with FAS, yet they have brain and other impairments that are just as significant. Alcohol-Related Neurodevelopmental Disorder (ARND) describes the functional or mental impairments linked to prenatal alcohol exposure.

### Learning Disability

Children with learning disabilities may be of average or above average intelligence but have difficulties remembering or understanding information. This term is also used as eligibility criteria for services at school through Special Education under state and federal law.

### Mental Disability

Mental disabilities is a term that is used to describe a wide variety of different challenges and can affect children in ways that are unique to each child, especially in regards to levels of severity. This is also a term used as eligibility criteria for Special Education services.

### Neglect

Neglect is the absence of essential and healthy nurturing of a child for their physical, intellectual, and emotional development. Neglect includes physical neglect, child abandonment and expulsion, medical neglect, inadequate supervision, emotional neglect and educational neglect by parents, parent substitutes, and other adult caretakers of children. Children who have experienced neglect may be challenged with emotional problems.

## Individual Child Index

The children are listed in the Picture Book by their first name, followed by an identification number. The last two letters of the identification number are the initials for the SNAP specialist for the child. The SNAPS and their contact information can be found on the back inside cover of the Picture Book.

Daniel (11) 3462MO .....	7	Michael (15) 3756KY .....	18
Michael (16) 3480BD .....	7	Chris (16) 3761DB .....	18
Lukas (13) 3531AKY .....	7	David (13) 3766MO .....	18
Vincent (14) 3531BKY .....	8	Tyler (15) 3774KY .....	19
Dana (14) 3534KW .....	8	Pat (16) 3775KY .....	19
James (13) 3542DB .....	8	Josselin (16) 3777JB .....	19
Cynthia (15) 3553KY .....	9	Zachery (16) 3779DH .....	20
Alisha (13) 3554KY .....	9	Sydney (8) 3782BD .....	20
Seth (15) 3555KY .....	9	Ashley (11) 3784DH .....	20
Joshua (15) 3556JB .....	10	Cindilynn (16) and Amber (13) 3786DB .....	21
Nick (10) 3596KY .....	10	Kelly (16) 3789DB .....	21
Trevaughn (11) 3581KY .....	10	Antone (14) 3790KY .....	22
Katie (15) 3611DB .....	11	Marcy (17), Patty (15), Emmy (11), Aaron (11) and Billy (10) 3792ABCDEDB .....	22
Mary (13) 3621KY .....	11	Ritchie (14) 3794KY .....	23
David (16) 3624BD .....	11	Ana (12) 3795BD .....	23
Davonald (16) 3626KY .....	12	Justin (11) 4000JB .....	23
Fairon (13) 3664JB .....	12	Charles (15) 4003JB .....	24
Amanda (17) 3680JB .....	12	Brandon (12) 4004JB .....	24
Jerry (8) 3682BD .....	13	Megan (9) 4008BD .....	24
Victorea (16) 3689JB .....	13	Tiffany (13) 4009BD .....	25
Larry (15) 3695DB .....	13	Zeke (11) 4012KY .....	25
Kaitlyn (14) 3701JB .....	14	Nicole (14), Joshua (10) & Noah (4) 4015ABCJB .....	26
Jerry (12) 3704DH .....	14	Kristian (9) 4016KY .....	26
Malique (11) 3713DB .....	14	Chris (13) and Sarah (14) 4017ABKY .....	27
Toby (7) 3716MO .....	15	Katie (15) 4018JB .....	27
Tristen (10), Irene (8) and Desiree (5) 3725ABCDB .....	15	Mary (16) 4020DB .....	28
Jill (16) 3728BD .....	16	Jamie (9) and Brian (7) 4022ABMO .....	28
Brandon (9) 3732DB .....	16	Christian (13) 4023MO .....	28
David (13) 3735KY .....	16	Chandler (10) 4024MO .....	29
Eric (14) 3745JB .....	17		
Tatianna (14) 3746KY .....	17		
Donelle (16) 3750JB .....	17		



to movies gets along well with others going to school responsible



**Daniel (11)**

Daniel is a loving young man who likes to play outside. He likes to play soccer, baseball, basketball, and go swimming. He also likes to go camping and especially likes to fish. Daniel enjoys going to church and likes to sing. He loves animals and would like to have a cat as a pet. He gets along well with other children at school and reports that recess is his favorite part of the school day.

Daniel needs a loving home that can provide good supervision and help him continue to heal from the wounds in his past. He needs to be the only child or the youngest child in the home. [3462MO] *Delaware County*



**Michael (16)**

Michael has a beautiful, warm smile. He is a quiet, friendly young man who enjoys spending time with others. Michael's greatest wish is to be adopted and have a family of his own. Ideally Michael says he would like to have a Mother and a Father as well as some siblings. He also loves dogs and would like to have a family pet. Michael says his favorite subjects in school are Math, Science, and Reading. He gets along well with and enjoys playing with his peers. He enjoys playing board games, playing outdoors on the playground, and playing with action figures.

Michael is looking forward to being with his new family and will do best in a home that can provide consistency, patience and structure. [3480BD] *Ohio County*



**Lukas (13)**

Lukas has a love for bugs! He likes caterpillars, butterflies, and beetles just to name a few. He is a friendly young man who likes to participate in sports. He likes baseball and basketball and collects sports cards of the different players. Lukas likes to play video games, watch movies and listen to the sound track from High School Musical.

Lukas needs a family that can provide stability, structure, love and patience. A strong positive male role model would be a great benefit. Lukas has siblings with whom he will need to maintain contact. [3531AKY] *Allen County*

# Opening hearts. Changing lives.

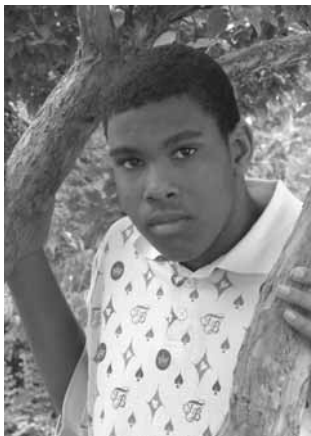
loves to be outdoors   quiet boy   develop and grow   singing in cho



## **Vincent (14)**

Vincent is a pleasant, likeable young man who loves to play video games. He also likes movies. He likes being physically active and likes playing on the trampoline. Vincent likes animals and would like to have a dog one day.

Vincent needs a family that can provide stability, structure, love and patience. A strong, positive male role model would be a great benefit. Vincent has siblings with whom he will need to maintain contact. [3531BKY] *Allen County*



## **Dana (14)**

Dana is quiet young man who keeps to himself most of the time. He is very pleasant to be around and very likeable. He describes himself as being friendly and having a good sense of humor. Dana enjoys sports including baseball, basketball and football. Football is his favorite sport and he likes to play whenever he has a chance. Dana likes to be outside playing sports or riding his bike. He also enjoys playing video games and some board games. Dana does well in school and has made Honor Roll twice. He says that Math is his favorite subject in school.

Dana would do best in a two parent home with a strong male role model. Dana needs a family that can give him lots of time and attention as he has missed out on this in his life. Dana will need to maintain contact with his grandmother, aunt, and uncle as they are important to him. [3534KW] *Allen County*



## **James (13)**

James is a very bright, athletic young man who loves to play basketball. He is full of energy and has a good sense of humor. At school he excels in reading and has the potential to be an "A" student. James loves to play outside, ride his bike, and spend time with his friends at the Boys and Girls Club in his community.

James has expressed a desire to be part of an African American family. He would do best as an only child or the youngest child. James will need a two-parent family with a strong father figure and a resilient mother figure. Single-male parents with a strong support system will be considered as well. James has two older siblings with whom he would like to maintain contact. [3542DB] *Vanderburgh County*

our needs structure outgoing and loveable very engaging helpful



**Cynthia (15)**

Cynthia is an outgoing young lady who likes to be the center of attention. She likes to be outdoors riding her bike whenever she can. She enjoys singing, playing video games and movies. Cynthia is very fond of animals and would like being in a family that has pets.

She will need a loving family that can provide structure and firm boundaries. She has a sister with whom she will need to maintain contact. [3553KY] *Allen County*



**Alisha (13)**

Alisha describes herself as “loveable!” She is smart, caring, and full of life. Alisha is determined to grow up to be strong and independent. She thinks she would like to be a music, art, or math teacher one day, but she isn’t ruling out being a model either. Alisha is creative and likes writing stories. She also enjoys crafts and makes jewelry and crochets. Alisha likes to sing and has been in the church choir in the past. Her favorite song is “I Believe I Can Fly.” She also enjoys playing soccer and volleyball.

Alisha needs a family that will make a permanent commitment to her and can provide structure and stability. She will do best in a home with clear boundaries and expectations. [3554KY] *Allen County*



**Seth (15)**

Seth is a pleasant and likeable young man. He likes to stay active and has a lot of outdoor interests. He likes to go fishing and swimming and enjoys flying kites when the wind is just right. Seth likes to ride his bike and go skate boarding when he has the opportunity. He also likes playing video games and catching a movie now and then. He is interested in animals and knows how to take care of horses.

Seth needs a loving family that can provide stability, structure and patience. He thrives on affection and approval from adults and needs a family that can spend time with him. He has two siblings with whom he will need to maintain contact. [3555KY] *Allen County*

# Opening hearts. Changing lives.

enthusiastic child receives treatment loves to sing would like to be



## **Joshua (15)**

Joshua is a polite and well mannered young man. He gets along well with his peers and enjoys playing basketball and ping-pong. Joshua likes to read and enjoys reading for pleasure. He likes to be around animals when he has the opportunity and has an interest in horses.

Joshua thinks he would like to live out in the country and will do best with experienced parents who can provide him with a routine and consistent rules, expectations, and consequences. Joshua has some siblings and a grandfather with whom he will need to maintain contact. [3556JB] *Jasper County*



## **Nick (10)**

Nick is a lively, little boy with crystal blue eyes. He can be very well-mannered and is affectionate. Nick likes to joke around and is a very imaginative young man. He enjoys getting one on one attention and responds well to praise.

Nick needs a family that can provide structure and consistency. He will do best with a family that can be patient and nurturing to help him reach his full potential. [3596KY] *Elkhart County*



## **Trevaughn (11)**

Trey has an easy smile and is very friendly. He is a tall, athletic boy who enjoys sports and has played on the school's football and basketball teams. He also enjoys riding his bike, skating, and playing with other kids in the neighborhood.

Trey needs a loving family that can provide structure, consistent routines, and clear boundaries and expectations. He will do best in a home with no younger children. Both single and two-parent families will be considered. [3581KY] *St. Joseph County*



e a cheerleader involved in 4-H can be charming close supervision



**Katie (15)**

Katie is energetic and outgoing. When asked what she thinks is the most interesting thing about her, she says it's that she was born in Russia. There are actually many interesting things about Katie. She loves gymnastics and has taken lessons in the past. She likes to play outside and particularly likes to swing. She is friendly and talkative and gets along well with other children. Katie likes to wear jewelry, get her nails done and loves the color pink. She likes to go out to eat and her favorite foods are macaroni and cheese, hot wings, and sweet tea. She also loves to sing and enjoys music, dance and cheerleading. Katie needs a family that can offer her safety and security. She is nervous about being adopted because she has learned that "some people seem nice at first, but then really aren't nice."

Katie needs a stable, committed family. She will need a family that can be patient and understanding as she learns to trust and feel wanted and safe. Both single-parent and two-parent families will be considered. [3611DB] *Monroe County*



**Mary (13)**

Mary is a very friendly, caring, and affectionate child. She is outgoing, easy to talk to and enjoys being around people. Mary enjoys doing things for others. She is talented in singing and dancing and enjoys reading and playing with dogs. Mary is an intelligent little girl and strives to do her best. She has made great strides in the last year and is doing well in school.

Mary hopes to be in a home with other girls close to her age so she can have someone to play with. She will need a patient, loving, and supportive family that will continue to help her grow and feel safe and secure. Both two-parent and single-parent families will be considered. [3621KY] *Allen County*



**David (16)**

David is a gently, tender-hearted boy. He will tell you right away that he loves super heroes and that Batman is his favorite. David would love to have a "Batman suit" to wear next Halloween. He is already planning his costume and his Christmas list which includes a Batman action figure. David describes himself as "friendly" and one who likes to meet and talk to new people. David also enjoys "little kids" and does well around them. David likes to play outside and enjoys basketball and playing with his toys. David also enjoys dancing and reports that he is a good dancer.

David says he would like to have a family and live somewhere where he could make friends. He also hopes to have a puppy in his new home. Most importantly, David wants a family that will not harm him. He wants a family that will love him and keep him safe. [3624BD] *Jackson County*

# Opening hearts. Changing lives.

excels at spelling wants to go to college loves to ride bikes very thou



## **Davonald (16)**

Davonald describes himself as a “sensitive” young man and others describe his as being kind, compassionate, and helpful. He says that most of the time he is easy to get along with and has a good sense of humor. Davonald likes to have fun and be active. He likes to be outside if it isn't too hot and also enjoys playing video games and listening to music on his CD player. Davonald enjoys many different types of music and has recently been listening to a Japanese artist.

Davonald would like to be a part of a family and thinks he might enjoy being an only child if possible although he does well with older siblings he can look up to. He is open to both two-parent and single-parent families. Davonald needs a family that will be patient with him and encourage him. He has siblings with whom he will need to maintain contact. [3626KY] *Allen County*



## **Faison (13)**

Faison likes to go fishing and says he can bait his own hook. In fact, Faison loves the outdoors and likes to be around animals. One of his favorite TV shows is “Animal Planet.” Faison is very interested in birds and would like to have a talking parrot some day. Faison is a delightful little boy who is bright, friendly, and polite. He loves everything about school. He finds learning exciting and is enjoying all the new experiences he is having at school. He loves to do things with his hands and likes to take things apart and try to fix them. He also likes to build things out of Legos. He hopes his new family has a workshop or a workbench, “where I can build things.” Faison also likes to play with cars, go skateboarding, play baseball, and ride his bike.

What Faison most wants people to know about him is that, “I’m a good kid and I try to be decent and kind.” He would love to have a Dad who would enjoy spending time with him and building things together. Faison would like his new family to be non-smokers. He will do best in a family that can provide consistency and structure as he adjusts to his new environment. [3664JB] *Fountain County*



## **Amanda (17)**

Amanda is a friendly, outspoken girl who likes to laugh. She likes to do arts and crafts of all different kinds. She enjoys crocheting and has made scarves, blankets, and potholders. She likes to play basketball and football and is a big Colts fan. Amanda enjoys school and says her favorites subjects are science and language arts courses. She thinks she might like to be a nurse one day and possibly work with the elderly.

Amanda is looking forward to being part of a family and would like to be in a home with other children. She likes younger children a lot, but thinks she would most enjoy have older siblings so she would have someone to look up to. Amanda enjoys going to church and hopes her new family does too. She has siblings with whom she is close to and she will need a loving family that is willing to help her maintain her relationships with them and provide her with structure and consistency. [3680JB] *Tippecanoe County*

thoughtful performs well in structured environments likes to get involved



**Jerry (8)**

Jerry is a pleasant, affectionate little boy who likes to give and receive hugs. He enjoys wrestling and rough-housing on the floor. He likes to listen to music and will sometimes babble and try to sing along. He likes to rock in his rocking chair or on a rocking horse. Jerry likes swinging and climbing into things he can sit in. He enjoys riding in the car and likes to sit in the shopping cart when his foster family goes shopping. Jerry is working on talking and can say “mommy” and “daddy” and will sometimes mimic other words.

Jerry is a sweet little boy who needs a family that can be patient and loving with him. A family with an extended support system and who is familiar with special needs children, developmental delays, and autism is preferred. [3682BD] *Bartholomew County*



**Victorea (16)**

Victorea, who prefers to be called Vicki, is a very bright girl who has many hopes and dreams. She is very creative and likes to crochet. She has made purses and blankets and enjoys other types of crafts as well. She enjoys music and knows how to play the clarinet. She hopes she will be able to play in the school band again when she joins her new family. Vicki likes to play volleyball and has been a cheerleader at her old school. Vicki says she “loves” school. She is a very good student and particularly likes Math classes. Vicki is looking forward to going to college and hopes to be a doctor one day.

Vicki says one of her greatest wishes is to be adopted and join her new family soon. She hopes her new family will enjoy spending time together and doing activities together. Vicki enjoys attending church and hopes her new family attends church together. [3689JB] *Tippecanoe County*



**Larry (15)**

Larry is a likeable and caring young man. He is affectionate, friendly and outgoing. He makes friends easily and enjoys playing with other children. Larry is very sympathetic when he sees that someone else is sad or hurt. He enjoys playing basketball and listening to music.

Larry needs a family that can provide structure and routine and help him continue to find positive ways to channel his feelings. Larry has siblings he cares deeply for and with whom he will need to maintain contact. [3695DB] *Vanderburgh County*

# Opening hearts. Changing lives.

smart, quick-witted sensitive child likes all types of music on medicine



## **Kaitlyn (14)**

Kaitlyn describes herself as “quiet” and is a little shy when she first meets new people. Those closest to her say they are starting to see a more social side of her emerging. Kaitlyn likes reading magazines, window shopping and Harley Davidson motorcycles. She lights up when talking about going swimming at the beach — her favorite place to be and her favorite activity!

Kaitlyn is very excited about joining a family and it is the one thing she wants the most in life right now. She will need a family that can provide structure and firm boundaries. Kaitlyn thrives on attention and will need a family that can spend quality time with her. She might do best in a home where she is the youngest or only child. [3701JB] *LaPorte County*



## **Jerry (12)**

Jerry has a quick smile and dancing brown eyes. When asked what he would want people to know about him, he says, “I’m handsome and friendly!” Jerry is all that and more! He likes to wrestle and play basketball and football. He hopes to play on the school team when he’s old enough. Jerry likes to play on his skateboard, and watch movies and cartoons. He enjoys school and says his favorite subject is Math. He has a good sense of humor and likes to play practical jokes on people every once in a while.

Jerry thinks he would like to be in an African-American family that has other children and maybe a dog. He hopes his new family attends church as he enjoys going to church and participating in the youth group activities. Jerry needs a loving permanent home that can provide structure and clear expectations. He needs a family that will help him feel important and valued. [3704DH] *Hendricks County*



## **Malique (11)**

Malique has a big smile and a lot of energy. His foster mom describes him as a very caring boy with a big heart. Malique likes to play on the computer and watch TV. He loves to be outdoors riding his scooter and playing with other kids in the neighborhood.

Malique does well with structure and routine and needs a home that can provide firm yet loving boundaries and expectations. Malique would do best with older siblings and thinks he would enjoy having an older brother. Malique has a sister with whom he will need to maintain contact. [3713DB] *Vanderburgh County*



ation likes to play with dolls likes to express himself creatively likes



**Toby (7)**

Toby is a friendly, outgoing child who loves to play outside. He also enjoys playing computer games and looking at books. His favorite video characters are the “Veggie Tales”. Toby has made great strides with communication skills and activities of daily living. He is eager to please others and responds positively to attention and affection.

Toby needs an experienced family that can provide structure, routine and close supervision at all times. A two-parent or family with a strong extended support system is preferred. [3716MO] *Delaware County*



**Tristen (10), Irene (8) and Desiree (5)**

Tristen is a loving, affectionate boy who is full of energy and life. He likes to please others and thrives on positive affirmation and praise. He is a little performer at heart and likes to sing and dance. He enjoys music and hopes to learn to play the piano and guitar some day. Tristen is also interested in sports and would like to play on a baseball or soccer team. He loves playing outdoors, swimming and riding his bike. Tristen looks forward to being part of a family and hopes he can have his own dog one day.

Irene loves to dress up and pink is her favorite color. She likes wearing dresses, painting her nails, and having her hair done. She also likes to sing, dance, and do cheers. Irene has expressed hope of becoming a cheerleader someday. Irene likes to watch movies, play with Barbies or do arts and crafts.

Desiree is a strong-willed, affectionate little cutie. She enjoys being outside and doesn't mind getting dirty. She likes to play in the swimming pool, ride her bike with training wheels and play in the sand. Like her big sister, she likes to put on make up for play, paint her nails, and have her hair done up in pig tails. Desiree loves music, playing with legos, doing puzzles and watching videos.

These children need a family that can provide structure and boundaries. They will continue to make great progress with love, patience, and guidance. These children will need a family that can be patient and supportive as they make the transition into their new home. [3725ABCDB] *Gibson County*

# Opening hearts. Changing lives.

loves to be outdoors   quiet boy   develop and grow   singing in cho



## **Jill (16)**

Jill is described as a “social butterfly”. She has a good sense of humor and gets along well with others. She is intelligent and does well in school. Jill thinks she would like to be a police officer when she grows up. Jill enjoys playing pool, basketball, soccer, and golf. She likes to listen to music and loves to read. She is active in her Youth Group and enjoys participating in church activities.

Jill looks forward to being part of a family and will do well in a home with clear boundaries and expectations. [3728BD] *Dearborn County*



## **Brandon (9)**

Brandon is a friendly, loving little boy with a good sense of humor. He does well in school and earns good grades. He has worked on improving his reading skills and enjoys reading to others. Brandon loves being outside and likes sports, riding his bike, camping, and swimming. He has played on a baseball team and enjoyed it so much he would like to do it again. Brandon is an affectionate little boy who responds well to encouragement and praise. When he does well, he feels proud of himself. Brandon is excited about getting adopted. He gets along well with other children and would love to have siblings.

Brandon will need a family that will love him unconditionally. He will do best in a home that provides structure and consistency while at the same time being patient and encouraging. [3732DB] *Greene County*



## **David (13)**

David is an intelligent young man with an independent spirit. He is a quick learner and can often memorize and recite information. He enjoys reading books in his spare time and especially loves the Harry Potter series. David also enjoys playing board games and basketball.

David will do well in a home that can offer consistent routine, structure, and supervision. He needs a family that can be patient and continue to help him build upon his strengths. He may do best in a home where he is the only child, or the youngest child. [3735KY] *Wabash County*

our needs structure outgoing and loveable very engaging helpful



**Eric (14)**

Eric loves animals and has enjoyed riding horses in the past. He hopes his new family will have pets so he can be around them and help care for them. Eric likes playing board games as well as being outside riding his bike or playing basketball. He likes school and says his favorite subject is Math. When he grows up, Eric would like to join the army and would be proud to defend his country if need be.

Eric is looking forward to being adopted and would like to have either a two-parent family or single-father family. He would love to have a big brother and would benefit from being around strong, positive male role models. Eric has a sibling with whom he will need to maintain contact. [3745JB] *Tippecanoe County*



**Tatianna (14)**

Tatianna is a vivacious girl who has a smile that lights up the room. She is very friendly and outgoing and loves to talk. She loves going shopping and eating out in restaurants. One of her favorite foods is Chinese food, but Chuck E. Cheese is also a favorite place to go. Tatianna likes school and says her favorite subjects are Math, Spelling, and Science. In the past she has been a school cheerleader and she hopes to get to do that again one day. Though she hasn't given it a lot of thought, she thinks that she might like to be a movie star when she grows up. Tatianna describes herself as "fun!" She likes to make others laugh and enjoys cutting up and being silly.

Tatianna enjoys going to church and hopes her new family will share that value with her. She says that she would be most comfortable with a single mother who is African American. Tatianna likes being around other children and hopes she will have brothers and/or sisters. [3746KY] *Allen County*



**Donelle (16)**

Donelle is a sensitive, quiet girl with a good sense of humor. She is a talented artist and enjoys drawing and crafts. She is very good at video games and loves to play whenever she has time. Donelle enjoys solitude and sometimes just needs some down time where she can read and relax. She is a loyal friend and goes out of her way to make sure others are happy and have what they need.

Donelle is nervous about being adopted and will need a family that can be patient with her as she may need to make a slower transition to feel secure. [3750JB] *Newton County*

# Opening hearts. Changing lives.

known to play rough received awards quiet, laid back helpful a



## **Michael (15)**

Michael is quite athletic and has a good throwing arm. He enjoys playing sports, especially basketball, football, and track. He also likes to listen to music, play video games, and watch action movies. Michael is skilled at solving brainteasers and riddles. Michael has been working hard on his issues and has been making good progress.

He will need a family that will be supportive and continue to work with him. Michael has siblings with whom he will need to maintain contact.  
[3756KY] *Elkhart County*



## **Chris (16)**

Chris likes to be around people and is an engaging conversationalist. He has a great smile and his eyes twinkle when he talks about his accomplishments. He is a talented artist and enjoys drawing all kinds of things. He has even done some illustrations for a cook book. Chris is very strong and athletic and loves to both watch and play sports. His favorites are basketball and football. He also enjoys just hanging out with friends talking or playing video games. Chris likes to go out to eat, but also enjoys cooking and likes to help prepare a meal himself. He likes school and has a great desire to learn. Math is his best subject and he is working hard at improving his Reading skills.

Chris is very eager to be adopted. He would love to be in a family that enjoys sports and being active. He would benefit from having older brothers or strong, positive, male role model. Chris needs a loving family that will be a strong academic advocate and continue to nurture his strengths. [3761DB] *Monroe County*



## **David (13)**

David enjoys swimming, going to the movies, and playing in the park. He likes sports, including baseball and football. He likes going to concerts and listening to Rap music. He likes going out to eat and says his favorite restaurant is Don Pablo's.

David has a good sense of humor and makes friends easily. He enjoys positive attention from adults and enjoys one on one attention. David says he would like to have a family that enjoys traveling and doing activities together.

David will need a family that can provide a structured and supervised environment. He would do best in a family with no other children or older children. [3766MO] *Hamilton County*



around the house   polite   plays the guitar   good at playing things



**Tyler (15)**

Tyler is a soft-spoken young man who likes to work with his hands. His foster parents describe him as being very trustworthy, hard working, and a quick learner. He has helped build decks and assisted with other projects. He helped put out a large garden and assisted in maintaining it until harvest. Like most boys his age he also likes to be active outdoors. Tyler enjoys playing baseball and is a good player. When he is indoors, Tyler loves to play games on Play Station.

Tyler needs a loving, nurturing family that can help him structure his time and provide stability. He has some birth family with whom he will need to maintain contact. [3774KY] *Wabash County*



**Pat (16)**

Pat is a very pleasant young man who is polite and respectful. He can be friendly and outgoing and gets along well with others. Pat enjoys making friends and being a friend and is easy-going and considerate of others. He is always willing to lend a hand and is often the first one to volunteer for chores. Pat is enjoying High School and the freedom it affords him. He likes being able to choose his classes and have the opportunity for vocational school. Pat very much enjoys working with his hands and prefers "hands on" learning situations. He likes being outdoors running and climbing as well as watching television and playing on his Game Boy.

Pat is at his best when he has a stable, calm routine. He needs a family that can provide love, nurturing and stability. He also needs someone who will help him stay on task with completing schoolwork. Pat has some siblings and grandparents with whom he wishes to maintain contact. [3775KY] *Wabash County*



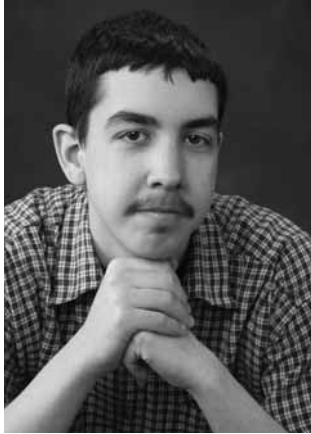
**Josselin (16)**

Josselin has a sweet disposition and a natural curiosity. She works hard and has a strong desire to do well. She likes school and does well academically. Josselin wants to be a child psychiatrist when she grows up so that she can use her own experiences to help other children. Josselin loves to read books, play soccer, and talk with her friends on the phone. She is friendly, outgoing, and gets along well with other children.

Josselin is eager to be adopted and needs a home that can give her a lot of support and encouragement. She is at her best when she feels secure in a structured, safe environment. Both single and two-parent families will be considered. [3777JB] *Porter County*

# Opening hearts. Changing lives.

enthusiastic child receives treatment loves to sing would like to be



## **Zachery (16)**

Zach loves electronics. He loves to turn up the stereo and listen to hip hop and rap music or play with his X-Box and Play Station. Zach likes to take things apart and thinks he would like to be an electrician or a mechanic when he gets older. He is friendly and has a good sense of humor. Zach enjoys spending time with his friends and enjoys being outdoors playing basketball or riding his bike. He likes to read and enjoys reading scary stories and mysteries.

Zach would like to be part of a family that is peaceful and more on the liberal, relaxed side of things. He hopes his new family will enjoy spending time together and having fun whether it's going on vacations or going out to the movies. Zach has siblings with whom he will need to maintain contact and needs a family that will be accepting and encouraging of this. [3779DH] *Marion County*



## **Sydney (8)**

Sydney is an adorable little girl who loves to go to school. She enjoys playing with other children and likes to color, read, and do puzzles. Sydney likes to help her foster mom around the house and is very good about doing her chores. She likes to play outside and ride her bike as well as playing with Barbie dolls and her Baby Alive.

Sydney is excited about being adopted and says she would like to have a family "the same color as me." Sydney needs a family that has strong parenting skills and can offer her love, structure and stability. [3782BD] *Floyd County*



## **Ashley (11)**

Ashley has a good sense of humor and likes to help others. She likes basketball and is a Pacer's fan. Ashley has a lot of energy and enjoys being outdoors and likes to play kickball. Ashley loves animals and would be very happy if her new family had dogs, cats and horses. She enjoys music, movies, and shopping for clothes. Ashley enjoys positive one on one attention from adults and thinks she might like to be an only child or maybe have one or two siblings.

Ashley is looking forward to being adopted and will need a family that can be patient and supportive of her as she transitions into her new home. She will do best in a home that can offer stability and structure. Both two-parent and single parent families will be considered. [3784DH] *Marion County*

e a cheerleader involved in 4-H can be charming close supervision



### **Cindilynn (16) and Amber (13)**

Cindilynn is friendly, easy-going young lady. She loves animals and is very good with them. She particularly loves horses and would enjoy having a horse or other animals around that she could help care for. She likes to hang out with her friends, listen to music, and play soccer. Cindilynn has a long term goal of becoming a nurse when she grows up. She is eager to be adopted and would love to have a family where she and her sister could be together.

Amber can be shy at first, but is open and friendly once she gets comfortable. She enjoys going to movies, bowling, and attending church. Like her sister, she enjoys being around animals. Amber also likes to read, play volley ball, and spend time with her friends.

Both girls love to shop for clothes and try new hairstyles and wear makeup. These girls need a home that can provide a high level of structure and supervision while maintaining some flexibility. The girls are at their best when boundaries and expectations are clear. The girls have older sisters with whom they may want to maintain contact. [3786DB] *Pike County*



### **Kelly (16)**

Kelly is a very personable young lady. She is friendly and thoughtful. Kelly excels academically and is very talented musically. She enjoys scrapbooking, skating, singing, and photography. She likes to listen to music, watch television and go shopping. Kelly plans to work with children some day and would definitely like to be a foster parent so she can help other kids in situations similar to hers. Kelly is looking forward to being adopted and being part of a family. She will need a family that can help guide her and help her plan for her young adult life. Both single and two-parent families will be considered. [3789DB] *Dubois County*



**Antone (14)**

Antone loves sports and has played on the school's football team. Recently he has begun practice for the school's wrestling team. His love of sports helps keep him motivated to maintain his grades. Antone can be outgoing and he enjoys receiving individual attention.

Antone will do best in a home that can provide structure and a high level of supervision, and clear expectations and boundaries. He would do best in a home with no younger children. Families with parenting experience are preferred. [3790KY]  
*St. Joseph County*



**Marcy (17), Patty (15), Emmy (11), Aaron (11) and Billy (10)**

Marcy is an avid reader. Her favorite thing to read in the whole world is Anime, which is a Japanese comic book. One of her dreams is to go to Japan some day. Marcy is a sweet girl with a good sense of humor. Marcy also enjoys drawing and playing video games.

Patty is very energetic and outgoing. She shares her sister's love of reading and enjoys reading novels. Patty is athletic and likes to run. She hopes to be on the track team next year. Patty's love of animals fuels her ambition to become a vet tech when she grows up.

Emmy is outgoing and friendly. She loves to play with her Bratz dolls and enjoys reading a drawing. Emmy is active in her church and enjoys attending Youth Group activities.

Aaron jokingly says one of his favorite pastimes is annoying his sisters! When he's not doing that, he loves to be outdoors playing basketball or soccer. He dreams of being a sports star one day but knows that won't last forever. When he retires from being a basketball or soccer player he plans to be a sports writer.

Billy is a delightful little boy who is very expressive. When he has to be indoors he likes to play with video games or watch television, but he loves to play outside and enjoys playing with remote control cars. In fact, Billy has quite a collection of cars.

These children are very bonded to one another and look forward to being adopted in a home where they can all be together. They will need a family that can provide a stable, safe, loving environment. These children have older siblings with whom they will need to maintain contact. [3792ABCDEDB] *Posey County*



thoughtful performs well in structured environments likes to get involved



**Ritchie (14)**

Ritchie is a warm, polite young man. He enjoys music and playing the piano. He loves to read and is very interested in learning foreign languages. He was able to learn some German from one of his foster parents and would also like to learn Spanish. Ritchie gets along well with other children and enjoys activities with the Boy Scouts and at the Boys and Girls Club. Ritchie loves animals and says it is very important to him to live in a home where there are animals around. Ritchie is a talented young man with a lot of potential.

He needs a family that can provide structure and stability and will love him unconditionally. A two-parent family with a strong, positive male role model is preferred. [3794KY] *Allen County*



**Ana (12)**

Ana loves animals and likes to help take care of the family pets. Although initially shy, once she warms up, she likes to talk and can be very engaging. Ana likes to watch TV, play tennis, basketball, and flag football. Ana has made a lot of progress in the last several months and will need a family that can be supportive and nurturing while at the same time providing structure and clear boundaries and expectations. Ana hopes her new family will have a dog, or let her pick out her own dog. She also has a sister with whom she would like to maintain contact. [3795BD] *Clark County*



**Justin (11)**

Justin is a friendly and affectionate young man. He is very popular among his peers and adults. He enjoys going out to eat, playing outside, and being on the computer. Justin has an interest in electronics and is fascinated by cell phones and computers. He loves visiting websites on the internet and has even designed his own web page. Justin also enjoys playing basketball and watching football games.

Justin needs a family that can provide stability, structure, patience, and consistency. A loving family with no children or older children would be ideal for Justin. [4000JB] *Lake County*

# Opening hearts. Changing lives.

known to play rough received awards quiet, laid back helpful a



## **Charles (15)**

Charles has been described as being very ambitious, goal driven, and intelligent. He likes school and is doing well academically. His favorite subject is Science. What Charles would most like people to know about him is that he is a very caring and understanding individual. He enjoys singing, taking long walks, and talking with friends.

Charles would love to have a family that will help him feel wanted and secure. Charles needs a family that will make a permanent commitment to him. [4003JB]  
*Lake County*



## **Brandon (12)**

Brandon has a great personality! He is very funny and loves to tell jokes and tease. He is friendly and likes to talk to people. Brandon enjoys sports, fishing, and playing video games. Brandon is looking forward to being adopted. He has a strong faith and enjoys attending church. He hopes his new family will share that value. Brandon hopes to have both a mom and a dad and would love to have older brothers.

Brandon needs a family that can be loving and supportive while providing structure and clear boundaries. Brandon has a sister with whom he will need to maintain contact. [4004JB] *Starke County*



## **Megan (9)**

Megan is very outgoing, energetic, and athletic. She can be very competitive and likes to play soccer and baseball, and do gymnastics. Megan enjoys school and says her favorite subjects are Math and Spelling. She likes reading with an adult and enjoys learning new things. Megan loves to be outdoors and likes to look for rocks to add to her rock collection. She likes to help with household chores and responds very well to positive attention from adults. Megan would love to be in a family with both a Mom and a Dad. She would also enjoy having a big sister and being in a family that has pets.

Megan needs an experienced family that can shower her with attention and provide structure and clear boundaries. She would do best as the youngest child in the home. [4008BD] *Bartholomew County*

around the house   polite   plays the guitar   good at playing things



**Tiffany (13)**

Tiffany has a bubbly personality and lots of energy. She loves music and likes to sing and dance. She participates in choir and Show Choir at school. She loves to spend time with her friends, go shopping and go to the movies. Tiffany has a deep love for animals and hopes to be a veterinarian someday. She hopes her new family will have cats and dogs. Tiffany enjoys going to church and participating in Youth Group. She is looking forward to being adopted and hopes her new family will also be involved in church life. Tiffany would like to have older siblings to look up to.

Tiffany will need a family that will be supportive and patient as she makes a transition into her new home. [4009BD] *Clark County*



**Zeke (11)**

Zeke is an intelligent and likeable boy who is very caring and sensitive. He enjoys playing with other children and likes to play baseball and other sports. Zeke is very interested in pro-wrestling. Zeke enjoys one on one attention and tries hard to make good choices. He likes to please others.

Zeke needs a family that is active and enjoys sports and doing other activities together. He will do well in a supportive, nurturing environment that offers structure and encouragement. [4012KY] *Elkhart County*



**Nicole (14), Joshua (10) & Noah (4)**

Nicole has a bright and cheerful personality. She is very friendly, outgoing, and talkative. Like most teens, she enjoys spending time with her friends going bowling, to the movies, or out shopping. Nicole enjoys sports and likes to play volleyball and basketball. She has been the manager for the boy's basketball team at her school. Nicole loves school and is a good student.

Joshua loves to be on Play Station and on the computer finding new games to play. Josh has a great smile and a playful personality. He enjoys living in the country and taking care of the cows and goats. Like his sister, Josh likes school and is a good student. He likes to play football, wrestling, and has been in Tae Kwon Do.

Noah likes to play with cars and motorcycles. He likes to be outdoors and play with his toys and other children. Noah is energetic and likes to get things done. He likes to please others and takes pride in his accomplishments. Noah also likes to color with crayons and likes to watch Blues Clues.

These children are looking forward to being adopted. Nicole would like a family that will enjoy supporting her in her sporting activities. Joshua will benefit from having a strong, positive male role model who will enjoy spending time with him. Noah needs loving parents who will continue to nurture his gains. These children will do well in a loving home that can provide structure and stability. [4015ABCJB] *Fountain County*



**Kristian (9)**

Kristian is an energetic young man who loves to jump and climb. His favorite activities are playing on the jungle gym and in the water. Kristian also enjoys spending quiet time cuddled in a blanket and watching a Disney video or having a book read to him.

Kristian has been making progress with some activities of daily living and responds well to positive rewards. He will need a loving and patient family who will support this growth and can provide structure, routine and close supervision at all times. [4016KY] *Allen County*



air needs structure outgoing and loveable very engaging helpful



**Chris (13) and Sarah (14)**

Chris is a creative young man who enjoys drawing and sketching. He loves to plan and build all types of structures. He has also worked with origami and recently sewed a stuffed snake for a school project. Chris is entering the eighth grade. He likes school most of the time. Chris also enjoys playing basketball and soccer and is currently taking Karate lessons. He hopes to one day become a builder, architect or an actor.

Sarah is a “girly-girl” who loves to go shopping and dress up in fashionable clothes, make-up and accessories. She also likes swimming, swinging and having overnights with friends. Sarah is a fan of Hannah Montana and the TV show, Zowie 101. Sarah is entering the sixth grade and does well in school. Her favorite subject is spelling. She likes playing basket-ball and is currently taking karate lessons. Sarah has an interest in learning to play the flute. She hopes to be a teacher when she is older.

Chris and Sarah would like to live in a home with a mother and father. These children are very bonded to one another and need a loving family that can provide supervision, clear boundaries, rules and expectations. Chris and Sarah hope to have siblings in the home and would do best as the youngest children. They have younger siblings with whom they will need to maintain contact. [4017ABKY] *St. Joseph County*



**Katie (15)**

One of Katie’s favorite activities is cooking. She loves to cook, bake, and eat! Katie has a warm smile and is friendly and talkative. She enjoys being outdoors riding her bike, going swimming, and playing in the park. Katie also likes to watch TV, go to the mall, and get her hair and nails done.

Katie would love to be part of a family. She would like to have a two-parent family and says that she loves little children and likes to help care for them. She likes pets and is particularly fond of puppies, kittens, and monkeys. Katie needs a family that will provide her with a loving, safe and structured environment. She has siblings with whom she will need to maintain contact. [4018JB] *Starke County*

# Opening hearts. Changing lives.

enthusiastic child receives treatment loves to sing would like to be



## **Mary (16)**

Mary is a delightful girl with a warm, outgoing personality. Mary loves to watch America's Next Top Model and hopes to be a supermodel one day. She loves shopping for clothes, doing her hair, and experimenting with makeup. Mary enjoys sports and likes to play softball and basketball. She likes to cheer, cook, and go for walks. Mary likes children and enjoys being around younger children and helping care for them. Although she isn't sure what she wants to be when she grows up, Mary knows that she wants to help people in some way.

Mary is looking forward to being part of a family and is very excited about adoption. She will do well in a home that likes to be on the go and can provide her with a structured, safe, and nurturing environment. Mary has siblings with whom she will need to maintain contact. [4020DB] *Vanderburgh County*



## **Jamie (9) and Brian (7)**

Jamie is a bit shy when meeting new people; although, once he warms up, he can be very sweet. He loves gadgets of all kinds. Jamie is mechanically inclined and also likes to build things. He collects DVD's and Star Wars figures which he keeps well organized. He enjoys fishing, playing outside, jumping on the trampoline and attending church activities.

Brian is a very active and outgoing boy. He enjoys playing outside, especially jumping on the trampoline and swinging. His favorite cartoon character is Spiderman. Brian enjoys trying new and challenging activities.

Jamie and Brian both enjoy spending time with their foster father and would benefit from a strong male role model. They will need an experienced two parent family that can provide structure, consistency and good supervision. Jamie and Brian should be the youngest or only children in the home. [4022ABMO] *Delaware County*



## **Christian (13)**

Christian describes himself as easy-going and friendly. He is very talkative and likes helping others. Christian enjoys playing sports especially football and basketball. He also likes to go fishing. Christian is intelligent and does well in school. His favorite subjects are reading and spelling. He loves to read, especially mystery novels.

Christian would enjoy living in the country. He likes to be busy and needs a loving family that can provide consistency, structure and support him in his continued growth. Families with parenting experience are preferred. [4023MO] *Blackford County*

e a cheerleader involved in 4-H can be charming close supervision



**Chandler (10)**

Chandler is an energetic boy who loves outdoor activities. He likes to ride four wheelers, fish, ride his bike, and play basketball and baseball. He enjoys spending time with his foster dad and doing activities with him. Chandler also likes to watch movies, cartoons, and collect Pokemon cards. He enjoys attending church and is active in his church youth group. When asked what he would want most in a family, he said he would want to be in a family that goes to church.

Chandler would enjoy having siblings around his age or older, and would benefit from having a strong, positive male influence. He will need a family that can be caring, patient, and consistent with him. [4024MO] *Grant County*

Opening hearts. Changing lives.  
enjoys playing with trains personable teen known to be shy going

## How to Adopt

*The information below provides an overview of the steps involved in adopting a child from the foster care system. This information has been reprinted in part from the National Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC) and can be read in more detail on their website at [www.nacac.org](http://www.nacac.org) or at [www.adop-tachild.in.gov](http://www.adop-tachild.in.gov).*

### Step 1: Educate Yourself about Adoption

#### Written Materials

- Some publishers and booksellers produce or market many child welfare and adoption-related materials. Some of the best known include:

#### **Child Welfare League of America**

440 First St. N.W., 3rd Floor  
Washington, DC 20001-2085  
202-638-2952 • fax: 202-638-4004  
web: [www.cwla.org/pubs](http://www.cwla.org/pubs)

#### **The Haworth Press, Inc.**

10 Alice St.  
Binghamton, NY 13904-1580  
800-429-6784 • fax: 800-895-0582  
e-mail: [getinfo@haworthpressinc.com](mailto:getinfo@haworthpressinc.com)  
web: [www.haworthpress.com](http://www.haworthpress.com)

#### **Perspectives Press**

P.O. Box 90318  
Indianapolis, IN 46290-0318  
317-872-3055 (phone & fax)  
web: [www.perspectivespress.com](http://www.perspectivespress.com)

#### **R-Squared Press**

721 Hawthorne St.  
Royal Oak, MI 48067  
248-543-0997 (phone & fax)  
e-mail: [brenr@r2press.com](mailto:brenr@r2press.com)  
web: [www.r2press.com](http://www.r2press.com)

#### **Tapestry Books**

P.O. Box 359  
Ringoes, NJ 08551  
800-765-2367 • fax: 908-788-2999  
e-mail: [info@tapestrybooks.com](mailto:info@tapestrybooks.com)  
web: [www.tapestrybooks.com](http://www.tapestrybooks.com)

#### **The National Adoption Information Clearinghouse**

**(NAIC)** publishes a wide variety of adoption fact sheets, many of which are free or very inexpensive. It also provides information about state and federal adoption laws, and tracks upcoming adoption conferences. NAIC's web site includes a searchable collection of adoption-related articles and report abstracts, as well as a directory of more than 5,700 public and private adoption agencies, support groups, and government officials. To learn more, contact:

#### **NAIC**

330 C St. S.W.  
Washington, DC 20447  
888-251-0075 or 703-352-3488  
fax: 703-385-3206  
e-mail: [NAIC@calib.com](mailto:NAIC@calib.com)  
web: [www.calib.com/naic](http://www.calib.com/naic)

#### **North American Council on Adoptable Children**

This national organization offers information and resources to support adoption of children from the foster care system. They host a national conference each year for adoptive families and families waiting to adopt.

970 Raymond Avenue, Suite 106  
St. Paul, MN 55114  
phone: 651-644-3036  
fax: 651-644-9848  
e-mail: [info@nacac.org](mailto:info@nacac.org)

- Your phone book. Adoption agencies, advocates, attorneys, support groups, and more can be found listed in the Yellow Pages under "Adoption."
- Use your public library. Most libraries now have online access so you can use the Internet, find listings of periodicals, and do inter-library transfers. A wealth of free information can be located through these means.
- Your home computer can be a gateway to adoption information. The Internet has no shortage of information about adoption.



to movies gets along well with others going to school responsible

## Adoption Conferences

Many national, regional, and local groups hold annual adoption conferences with workshops geared toward new or prospective adoptive parents.

## Self Assessment

Children don't need perfect parents, just one or two individuals willing to meet the unique challenges of parenting and make a lifetime commitment to caring for and nurturing their children. One of the advantages of special needs adoption is that almost any responsible adult can become an adoptive parent. Prospective parents do not have to be rich, married, under 40, highly educated, or homeowners to adopt. Far more important are personal characteristics like:

- a belief in adoption and an ability to commit;
- patience and perseverance;
- a good sense of humor and talent for keeping life in perspective;
- a love of children and parenting;
- the ability to roll with unexpected changes, stresses, and challenges;
- the ability to deal with rejection without taking it personally;
- the ability to accept without judging;
- tolerance and understanding for your child's conflicting feelings and your own;
- an awareness that healing doesn't come quickly, all wounds cannot be healed, and your child may not attach to your family;
- the strength to be consistent and set limits;
- a willingness to learn new parenting techniques and advocate for your children's educational and medical needs; and
- resourcefulness.

If you have all or most of those qualities, then ask yourself these questions:

- Do I clearly understand why I want to adopt?
- If applicable-Do my partner and I work as a team? Are we both committed to adoption?
- If applicable - Have I talked with my own children and considered their feelings?
- Does my lifestyle allow me the time necessary to meet the needs of a special child?

Think carefully about your answers to these questions. You may decide to pursue a different type of adoption, consider foster care, or realize that adoption really is not for you. Take the time to make a good decision, because it is a decision you and your adoptive child will live with for life.

In addition, before seriously contemplating special needs adoption, prospective parents must honestly evaluate their desire and ability to successfully parent children who have troubling pasts and uncertain futures. Many children who become available for adoption at older ages have not received the early care that kids need to develop a strong sense of security, trust, and self-esteem. Many also suffer from conditions caused by past trauma, or prenatal exposure to alcohol or drugs. Children whose backgrounds include traumatic experiences, abuse, and/or neglect may exhibit symptoms of distress such as:

- aggressiveness
- attachment disorders
- attention deficits and hyperactivity
- bed wetting
- defiance
- depression
- impulsiveness
- learning disabilities
- low self-esteem
- lying
- poor peer relationships/social skills

Fortunately, through therapy, medication, and consistent care, children can overcome or at least better cope with many of these challenges.

Most children put their new adoptive parents through a period of testing to see if the parents are truly committed or just waiting for an excuse to desert the child as others have done before. To improve your chances of successfully adopting a child who has special needs, be prepared to offer a home environment that combines extra love, support, and attention with clear structure and consistent limit-setting. Parents should also be ready to actively advocate for their child at school, with peers, and within the community. It can be immensely helpful for parents to have a support network or belong to an adoptive parent support group.

## Step 2: Decide What Type of Adoption You Want to Pursue

Even if you already know that you want to adopt a child who has special needs, you still need to make a number of choices about your adoption. Most importantly, you need to decide what type of child you are willing to bring into your family. What disabilities and challenges (physical, mental, emotional, or behavioral) can you comfortably handle? What age range, background, and ethnicity would fit best within your household and community? Are you open to helping your adopted child maintain contact with some of his or her birth relatives? Can you welcome a group of two or more siblings into your home?

Next, you might want to consider whether you would rather work through a public or a private adoption agency. Though most children who have special needs become available for adoption through the public foster care system, both public and private agencies can help you locate a child or sibling group to adopt.

## Step 3: Investigate Ways to Cover Adoption Expenses

Many agencies do not charge service fees to families who adopt children from the foster care system. However, you will need a home study, and because adoption is a legal process, you may need an attorney. The cost of a home study can vary from \$0 to \$2,000. Attorney fees and court costs can range from \$1,000 to \$2,000, and special needs adoptive families often incur additional costs for medical services, counseling, etc.—costs that may continue throughout the child's lifetime. Fortunately, due to federal and employer-initiated programs, parents have several options for covering the cost of special needs adoption.

### Loans

Many loans are project- or item-specific, but some can be used for whatever the borrower wants. Two such flexible loans are home equity loans (money borrowed against the value of your house) and insurance loans (money borrowed against the value of your life insurance policies). These loans come with relatively low interest rates and a choice of payment terms. To learn more, contact a bank or mortgage broker, or your insurance company.

### Employer Assistance

Employers who offer adoption benefits may provide workers with:

- direct cash assistance for adoption expenses;
- reimbursement of approved adoption expenses;
- paid or unpaid leave (beyond federal leave requirements established through the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993); or
- resource and referral services.

To request a list of employers who provide adoption benefits or learn more about employer-provided adoption benefits, contact: Adoption Benefits Coordinator, National Adoption Center, 1500 Walnut Street, Suite 701, Philadelphia, PA 19102; 800-TO-ADOPT or 215-735-9988.

### Tax Credits and Exclusions

Through tax year 2002, adoptive parents can take advantage of tax credits or exclusions to offset qualifying adoption expenses for a domestic special needs adoption. For detailed information about the credit and exclusion, review IRS Publication 968, "Tax Benefits for Adoption." Get a copy by calling 800-829-3676 or checking the Internal Revenue Service's web site at [www.irs.ustreas.gov](http://www.irs.ustreas.gov).

### Adoption Subsidies

If you adopt a child who has special needs, he or she may be eligible for federal adoption assistance. Adoption assistance payments are designed to help offset the short- and long-term costs associated with adopting children who need special services. In general, children who are wards are eligible for adoption assistance benefits under specific eligibility guidelines. Benefits available through subsidy programs vary.

### Indiana Adoption Subsidy Programs for The Special Needs Adoptive Child

#### Title IV-E-AAP, NRAE and Medicaid

Under Title IV-E of the Social Security Act, the Adoption Assistance Program (AAP) in Indiana provides negotiated monthly maintenance payments for the eligible child up to a maximum of 75% of the foster family home rate for the child. It also provides Medicaid. Eligibility for AAP requires a determination that the child is a special needs adoptive child and that the child is categorically eligible for the program.

The Indiana Title IV-E Non-Recurring Adoption Expense (NRAE) program provides reimbursement up to a maximum of \$1,500.00 for the necessary and reasonable costs of the

to movies gets along well with others going to school responsible

adoption of the special needs child. In order for the adoption of a child to be eligible for NRAE, the three special needs requirements of the child, as listed below, must be satisfied.

If a child is determined eligible for AAP, then the adoptive parent(s) also is entitled to receive NRAE for adoption expenses not otherwise reimbursed. However, because there is no categorical eligibility for NRAE as there is for AAP, the adoption of a child who is not eligible for AAP may still qualify for NRAE.

**AAP/NRAE Special Needs Requirements**

In order for the adoption of a child to be eligible for NRAE and in order for the child to be determined a special needs child for AAP, all three of the following numbered requirements must be satisfied prior to the finalization of the adoption of the child:

1. The County Department of Child Services (CDCS) determines that it is not in the child's best interest to be returned to the parents, based on the existence of at least one of the following:
  - Child's foster care permanency plan is adoption.
  - Parent(s) has signed consent for the child's adoption.
  - There is a court-ordered termination of the parental rights (TPR) of the parent(s).
  - Parent(s) is deceased.
  - There is a court determination that it is in the child's best interest not to be returned to the parent(s), and parental consent(s) is not necessary for one or more of the reasons cited in Indiana law under IC 31-19-9.
2. The CDCS determines that adoption of the child is unlikely without Title IV-E assistance because of one of the following specific factors or conditions:
  - Child is age 2 or older.
  - Child is a member of a sibling group placed together, one of whom is age 2 or older.
  - Child has a medical condition or a physical, mental or emotional disability; or the child is at medical high risk of such condition or disability. The condition, disability or high risk must be verified by a physician licensed to practice medicine in the U.S. or a U.S. territory.

3. The CDCS determines that reasonable efforts were made in the U.S. to place the child without IV-E assistance. This requirement may be waived if the CDCS determines such efforts would not be in the child's best interest because of the child's emotional bond with the prospective adoptive parent(s) who is the child's relative(s) or who has been the child's foster parent(s) for at least 6 months.

**AAP Categorical Eligibility of the Child**

In order to be eligible for AAP, the child must meet not only the three special needs requirements described above, but the child must also be determined eligible on the basis of one of the following categories:

1. Child is eligible for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) no later than the date of the filing of the adoption petition.
2. Child is eligible for Title IV-E Foster Care (IV-E FC) at the time of the adoptive placement.
3. Child was eligible for AAP in a prior adoption.
4. Child of a minor IV-E FC parent who is placed with this minor parent and whose costs of care are included in the minor parent's IV-E FC payment.
5. Child is AFCD-eligible (AFDC, as the program was in effect on July 16, 1996) at both of two times:
  - At the judicial removal, the child is eligible for AFDC on the basis of age, citizenship, living with a specified relative, parental deprivation, family income and family resources.
  - At the filing of the adoption petition, the child is AFDC-eligible on the basis of age, parental deprivation, child's income and child's resources.

**County Adoption Subsidy**

Under Indiana law, the County Department of Child Services (CDCS) can provide an adoption subsidy for the hard-to-place adoptive child who is under the care and placement responsibility of the CDCS. There is no application form. Rather, the adoptive parent(s) must request the subsidy in the adoption petition filed with the court. The judge determines the child's eligibility as a hard-to-place adoptive child on the basis of the child's age, race, ethnic group, language, sibling group or medical condition or physical, mental or emotional disability. The judge may order one or both of the following two types of county adoption subsidy in the adoption decree:

- Maintenance subsidy, up to maximum of 100% of the

child's foster family home rate.

- Subsidy for the health care expenses related to the child's specified condition.

*NOTE: A child may be eligible for either AAP or a county adoption subsidy, or both subsidies. If the child receives both AAP and a county adoption subsidy, the total maintenance payments for the child cannot exceed the foster family home rate for the child.*

### **Indiana Adoption Subsidy Program**

The Indiana Adoption Subsidy Program (IASP) provides Medicaid for the eligible child for whom a county adoption subsidy is ordered, but who is not also eligible for IV-E AAP. The County Department of Child Services (CDCS) determines the adoptive child's eligibility for IASP, based on both of the following requirements:

1. The court orders a county adoption subsidy (a monthly maintenance payment or a health care expense subsidy, or both).
2. The CDCS documents that the child is eligible for Medicaid because the child has a medical, physical, mental or emotional condition, or the cause of such condition existed, at the time of the adoption finalization, as verified by a licensed physician, licensed psychologist or licensed social worker.

### **Other Requirements for Adoption Subsidies**

An adoption subsidy may be appropriate provided all eligibility requirements for the subsidy program are met. In addition, the following requirements in an adoption case apply for receipt of an adoption subsidy in Indiana:

1. The adoption must be a legal adoption.
2. Each adoptive parent must satisfy the federal requirement regarding the safety of children. That is each parent must have a criminal background check.
3. An adoptive placement across state lines must have any required approval of the Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children (ICPC).
4. No subsidy is available for an adoption by a birth parent or by anyone residing with, or married to, a birth parent. This applies also to a birth parent whose parental rights have been legally terminated.

### **Interstate Issues and Medicaid**

Both AAP and county adoption subsidy maintenance payments are available for the eligible Indiana Child who is placed in another state, and both continue in the event of a move across state lines. States cooperate to ensure protection of the rights of the adoptive child receiving a subsidy through the Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (ICAMA). Regarding the provision of Medicaid for the eligible child, the following apply:

1. If the AAP child is placed in or moves to another state, Medicaid becomes the responsibility of the child's state of residence.
2. If the IASP child is placed in or moves to another state, Medicaid availability in the state of residence depends on the other state's laws and policies regarding Medicaid for a state-funded subsidy child.

### **Where to Apply for IV-E AAP/NRAE**

1. If the child is under the care and placement responsibility of an Indiana County Department of Child Services, application is made to that County office.
2. If the child is under the placement responsibility of the agency of another state that is comparable to the Department of Child Services in Indiana, application is made to the appropriate office in the other state.
3. If the child is not under the care and placement responsibility of the state agency of any state, application is made to the appropriate office in the state of residence of the adoptive parent(s).

### **Appeal and Request for a Fair Hearing**

Appeal of an action by an Office of the Division of Family and Children and a request for a fair hearing should be sent to:

Indiana Department of Child Services

Hearings and Appeals

402 W. Washington Street Room W392

Indianapolis, IN 46204-2773

For additional information about the Indiana adoption subsidy programs, contact your County Office of Family and Children. Online: [www.IN.gov/fssa](http://www.IN.gov/fssa)

This information was reprinted in entirety from state pamphlet: DFC PAM 0012 (7-02)



to movies gets along well with others going to school responsible

## Step 4: Select an Adoption Agency

### How to Find Agencies

To find as many agencies to choose from as possible, consider several of the options listed below:

- The Indiana Adoption Program is coordinated through the County Department of Child Services (CDCS) and private Licensed Child Placing Agencies (LCPA) that are contracted with the local counties to provide adoption services, including Family Preparation. You can contact the Indiana Adoption Program at 1-888-25-ADOPT or e-mail at [adoption@iquest.net](mailto:adoption@iquest.net) for agency information in your area.
- Look in the Yellow Pages under “Adoption” or “Social Services” for private adoption agencies. If you live in a small town, you may want to check in a phone book from a larger community nearby.
- Contact adoptive parent support groups or adoptive parents for suggestions. Both are a great source of information about agencies and adoption, plus they are usually eager to share what they know with prospective adopters. To find an adoptive parent support groups in your area contact your local county DCS to see if they know of one or use the Internet to search. Support groups are generally very informal and you may need to ask people in your community who have adopted to find out if a group meets near you.

### Finding the Right Agency for You

To find a public or private agency that is a good fit for you, your beliefs and values, and your unique situation, compare information from several different agencies. Most will gladly provide details about their services and requirements upon request. Before selecting an agency, take the initiative to interview agency representatives by phone or in person to learn more about them. You may want to ask:

- Who can adopt from the agency?
- What kinds of children does the agency place (ages, backgrounds, etc.)?
- Does the agency work with the foster care system or is it exclusively a private adoption agency?
- Where do the agency's children come from, and how many are legally free for adoption?
- How long, on average, must one wait for a child? What is the time lapse between application and placement?
- How much does a completed adoption cost-in total and part by part?
- What are the assessment or home study requirements?
- What services-such as parenting classes, support group activities, access to therapy and counseling, and respite care-will the agency provide before and after a child is placed in your home?
- Can the agency provide references from parents who recently adopted from the agency?

### **Step 5: Let Your Agency Know You Are Serious about Adopting**

When you call an agency to let staff there know you are interested in adopting, the person you talk to may ask a series of screening questions or simply volunteer to send literature about the agency. If you want to adopt relatively soon, find out how you can get the process started.

One common first step is an orientation meeting or training session for prospective adoptive parents. At the meeting or training you will likely:

- meet social workers and learn about policies and practices regarding adoption;
- learn what types of children are available for adoption through the agency;
- learn about foster care;
- be asked to examine your feelings about adoption, and judge if adoption is the right choice for you;
- gain insight into the challenges and rewards of adoptive parenting; and
- obtain application materials.

### **Step 6: Adoption Application**

The application process may be different between private agencies and those agencies (LCPA) that contract with the DCS for the Indiana Adoption Program. If you are adopting a child who is in foster care, you may need to attend several of the educational workshops before you begin the application or Family Preparation process.

If you find that the application process is hard to understand, ask the agency or another adoptive parent for help. Don't let the challenges of completing forms keep you from pursuing adoption.

Find out how long it will take for the agency to process your application once you have completed the forms. Ask when you should next expect to hear from the agency, and how you can schedule and prepare for an assessment or home study.

### **Step 7: Attend Adoption and Parenting Classes**

Public agencies commonly require pre-placement training to acquaint prospective parents with issues that can arise after a child or sibling group is placed with them. School-aged adoptees bring not only unique special needs, but also a history of life experiences that will affect interactions with adoptive parents, new siblings, schoolmates, and others. Issues related to disability, culture, early abuse, and a child's birth family should all be discussed before a child is placed in your home.

Prospective Adoptive Parents who want to be approved to adopt children through the Indiana Adoption Program must complete 26 hours of adoption preparation training in scheduled workshops. Pre-Adoption Training is scheduled through your local Training Coordinator. To find out whom the Training Coordinator is in your area contact the Indiana Adoption Program.

### **Step 8: Begin the Family Preparation Process**

The Family Preparation process can loosely be defined as an educational process designed to help your social worker learn more about your ability to parent and provide a stable home, to teach you about adoption and its effect on children and families, and to prepare you to parent a child whose experiences and history are very different from your own. Everyone who hopes to adopt must have a completed Family Preparation Assessment, also called a home study. Depending on the agency, the worker, and the prospective parents' cooperation, the process can take anywhere from two months to a year.

#### **Items You May Need for a Family Preparation Assessment (Home Study)**

Specific requirements for assessments or home studies vary by agency, so be sure to ask for a list of the items and information your agency needs. The following items are commonly required during the assessment process:

- an autobiographical statement—a statement you create about your life history;
- certified copies of birth certificates for you, your partner, and any children;
- a certified copy of your marriage license;
- certified copies of divorce decrees;
- the death certificate of a former spouse;

to movies gets along well with others going to school responsible

- certified copies of the finalization or adoption decrees for any adopted children;
- child abuse and criminal record clearances, or a notarized statement from the police declaring that you and your partner have faced no felony convictions;
- income verification (may include tax returns, W-2 forms, and paycheck stubs);
- a statement of health provided by a physician, which might include lab test results or a statement of infertility;
- written references from friends, employers, neighbors, etc.; and

At some point in the process, you may also need to pay for the home study. The cost through a public agency may be quite low or even free; other agencies typically charge between \$500 and \$2,000 for a completed study.

### Questions You May Be Asked

During Family Preparation meetings with your worker, you can expect to answer questions about your background, your education, your job history, your marriage, your leisure activities, your religion (particularly for religiously affiliated agencies), and your experiences with children. For instance, the worker may ask:

- What is your family like? How will you integrate your new child into your family?
- How will your extended family treat an adopted child?
- How is your marriage? How do you make decisions, resolve conflicts, and express your feelings?
- Why do you want to adopt?
- What is your home like? Are there places for your child to play or spend time alone?
- What is your neighborhood like?
- How do you plan to address discipline issues with your new child?
- What was your family like when you were growing up? How were you raised? Are you close to your parents?
- Where do you work? Is your schedule flexible enough to accommodate the responsibilities that come with parenting?
- What sort of child care arrangements will you make for your child?

The aim of any assessment or home study is to help the agency locate the best home for each child it places, and make

good matches between prospective parents and children. If you have questions about the process, ask your social worker or agency.

### Step 9: Begin Searching for a Child

If you adopt through the Indiana Adoption Program, you are urged to complete training and your Family Preparation process before you begin searching for a child. It may take several months for you to complete the process and become approved to adopt, so a child that you see listed in the Picture Book now may not be available several months from now.

The children are listed in the Picture Book by their first name, followed by an identification number. The last two letters of the identification number are the initials for the SNAP specialist for the child. The SNAPS and their contact information can be found on the back inside cover of the Picture Book.

If you adopt through a private agency, learn how the agency will conduct a search. What criteria do they use to match children with families? Are they willing to search outside your immediate area for a child? If you learn of a child in another state, will the agency pursue the child for you?

### Step 10: Considering a Child

Before agreeing to accept any child or sibling group for adoption, learn as much as you can about the child—including prenatal care and exposure to drugs or alcohol, birth parents' medical histories, attachments to foster families or other relatives, foster care placements, relationships with siblings, interests and talents, etc. Most agencies want adoptive parents to get to know children before agreeing to adopt. If the child has certain medical conditions or other disabilities, decide if your family is prepared to address issues that may arise from the child's situation.

If you agree to adopt and accept placement of a child whose birth parents' rights have not been voluntarily surrendered or involuntarily terminated (known as a legal-risk placement), you must accept the chance that the child could be returned to his or her birth parents. Until birth parents' rights are terminated, the child cannot legally become a member of your family and must instead stay in your home as a foster child.

### Questions for Prospective Adoptive Parents to Ask

- a. What is known about the child's birth history?
- b. What is known about the child's developmental history — physically, mentally, emotionally and socially?

- c. Is there any evidence of handicap? Any suspected learning difficulties?
- d. When was last contact with any birth family member?
- e. Are there pictures the birth family can pass on, or any family memento?
- f. Is there a Life Book for the child?
- g. Are there any siblings? Will it be possible or beneficial for ongoing contact with siblings (if they have been separated)?
- h. What social and medical history is available on the parents? On extended family members or siblings?
- i. Do the parents have a history of drug or alcohol abuse? Was the mother using substances during the pregnancy?
- j. What was the home environment like? What was the environment of the foster home(s) like?
- k. How many moves or placements did the child experience and why did they occur?
- l. What is the child's current adjustment status?
- m. Has the child been prepared for the adoptive placement? How can you help?
- n. What is the child's current health status? Does the child have any allergies?
- o. Is there any history of physical, sexual or emotional abuse? What treatment has been pursued?
- p. What method of discipline works best with the child?
- q. Does the child accept and give affection?
- r. Does the child have any therapeutic needs or treatment plans?
- s. What adoption subsidy options are there for the child?

## Step 11: Prepare for Your Child's Arrival

Anticipate how the addition of a new family member will affect your life and plan accordingly. Depending on your situation and the child you adopt, you may need to:

- Update the family's insurance. Adoptees can be covered under your health insurance from the date they are placed with your family. Group health insurance carriers must insure adoptees under the terms of their parents' policy and cannot deny coverage due to pre-existing conditions. Add a child to your health insurance plan within 30 days after he or she is placed in your home. If your child is eligible for an adoption subsidy, he or she may be covered through Medicaid. Also change beneficiary designations on life insurance policies and update wills as needed.

- Get and keep a copy of the adoption decree with the child's amended birth certificate. Once the adoption is finalized, that document may be sealed and neither you nor the adoptee can access it. Without it, some adoptees have had trouble getting passports and applying for affirmative action status. With it, adoptees may have an easier time searching for their biological roots, if and when they decide to do so.
- Prepare to get a new social security card and birth certificate for your child that recognizes the child's new last name and family situation. To claim your child as a dependent for tax purposes, the child must have a social security number.
- Learn as much as you can about the child's habits and personality. Talk to the child's foster parents and worker so you can learn information that will help ease the child's transition into your family. What are the child's favorite foods and games? What is the best way to comfort the child?
- Keep items that tie to the child's past. Encourage the child to bring all his possessions from previous homes, and ask the foster parents and workers for copies of any pictures they have of the child. Never throw away broken toys or worn out clothes unless the child wants to. Familiar objects and smells are comforting, and the child needs you to respect that he has a past and prior attachments and loyalties.
- Make your house child-friendly. Reposition or remove household objects that could be dangerous to your new child. Prepare the child's room to make it welcoming and to signal that the area belongs to him or her.
- Inform your other children about changes that will occur. Tell your children how their roles may change when the new child arrives. Prepare them to share, adjust schedules, and withhold judgment during the transition. Include everyone in visits and trial weekends before the child is placed, and establish clear ground rules for behavior, interaction, and discipline.
- Negotiate an adoption assistance agreement. Parents who adopt an eligible child with special needs from a public or private agency can receive federal or state benefits for their child. Ask your agency what steps you must take to obtain a subsidy and negotiate an agreement.

Line up services for your child and yourself.

to movies gets along well with others going to school responsible

## Step 12: The Child is Placed in Your Home

If you adopt a younger child, you may need to find day care. If you adopt an older child, you may need to enroll him or her in school; arrange for therapy, counseling, or tutoring; and identify respite care options. You might also want to join an adoptive parent support group.

Children who are placed for adoption through public agencies may move in with an adoptive family as soon as the parents complete required pre-placement visits and are approved to adopt—provided the timing is not unnecessarily disruptive to the child's schooling or other activities.

When a new child is placed in your home, you will assume temporary legal custody. For a few months, while your family undergoes the inevitable adjustment period, your agency will monitor how the placement is proceeding.

The monitoring period typically lasts about six months to a year. During this time, the worker may call or visit to assess how you and your new child are adjusting, and to answer questions. If all goes well, at the end of the monitoring period the agency will recommend to the court that the adoption be approved.

## Step 13: File a Petition to Adopt

An adoption petition is the document filed in court that initiates the legal aspect of adoption. Through the petition, adoptive parents formally request permission to adopt a specific child. To file a petition you will likely need the following information and documentation:

- the child's birth certificate or birth date and place of birth;
- a written statement that confirms your desire and suitability to adopt, as well as your ability to provide financially for the child;
- a written declaration that the adoption is in the child's best interest;
- your name, age, and address;
- the date on which and from whom you received custody of the child;
- a statement of the legal reason why the birth parents' rights are being (or have been) terminated; and
- a disclosure of any relationship that you share with the child (other than as an adoptive parent)—such as being the child's aunt, grandparent, or stepparent.

## Step 14: Finalize the Adoption

Your adoption is not legally complete until your newly created family goes through the finalization process. Finalization hearings usually take place within a year after a child is placed in the home. Before scheduling a hearing, check with your agency to make sure you have completed the necessary paperwork. If you are missing required documents, the finalization could be delayed.

The finalization hearing is a judicial proceeding, sometimes held in the judge's chambers, during which adoptive parents are granted permanent legal custody of their adopted child. The hearing, which usually lasts only 30 to 60 minutes, is designed to establish the legality of the new family unit, and confirm that the adoptive parents are willing and able to provide for their new child.

### Who Should Attend the Hearing

The following individuals generally attend the finalization hearing:

- the adoptive parents and adoptee(s);
- the adoptive family's lawyer; and
- the agency social worker who placed the child with the adoptive parents.

In a few cases, the child's birth parents may also appear, but only if their parental rights have not yet been terminated or if they are participating in an open or cooperative adoption.

### What the Hearing Involves

To verify that the adoption should take place, the court will attempt to establish that the child has been placed in a safe, loving home. Expect to list all the identifying information included in your adoption petition and answer questions such as:

- Why do you want to adopt?
- How will you care for your new child?
- How will your family adjust to a new child?
- Is there anything the court should know before finalizing this adoption?

As soon as the judge signs the adoption order, you gain permanent legal custody of your child. Finalization is the last formal step in the adoption process and marks the official beginning of your new family. From this point, learn as much as you can about post-adoption services (like respite care, support groups, etc.) that can help you make the most of your new role as an adoptive parent.



## The Legal Aspects of Adoption

Prospective adoptive parents should consult an attorney for legal advice and as they prepare to adopt a child.

### Selecting an Attorney

Federal and state laws that apply to foster care and adoption require certain steps to be followed prior to the finalization of an adoption. It is important to have an attorney to represent you in the adoption process. Your family, friends or individuals you know who have adopted may be able to recommend an attorney for legal advice and you can find out more information on attorneys from your local county Bar Association. Sometimes it is helpful for an attorney to have knowledge of the foster care system.

For a referral to an attorney trained by ACT in adoptions from foster care, or for a free consultation with an ACT-trained attorney, call the hotline for 'Adoption in Child Time' 1-877-ACT-4KIDS.

### Attorney Fees

Attorney fees vary around the state. You will need to ask the attorney what fees they charge and how they bill their services. Since some children are eligible for an adoption subsidy (a one-time reimbursement of legal fees or non-recurring adoption expenses with a maximum expenditure of \$1500 per child) your attorney may be able to assist you in applying the subsidy to their fees.

### Approval

Prospective adoptive parents need an approved Family Preparation Assessment (Home Study) to be recommended for a child who is a ward. Your local county Department of Child Services (DCS) and/or the private agency (LCPA) that contracts with the county must determine if you have been approved. You are required to have written approval before a child can be placed with you for adoption and through your local court jurisdiction.

### Agency Supervision

Indiana law requires that adoptions be granted only after a period of supervision has been met. The child and adoptive family relationship must be supervised by a local county Department of Child Services or private child placing agency (LCPA) that contracts with them. The length of the supervision period is at the discretion of the court, however most courts require a standard time period of six months.

### Required Consents

The consent of the child's mother, if she is living, is required by law to complete an adoption. The consent of a child's father who has established paternity or signed a paternity affidavit is also required. The county Department of Child Services (DCS) may have completed a court action to terminate the parent-child relationship so that a child who is a ward can be legally free for adoption, whether the child's parents have consented or not determines the type of court action that is necessary. You will need the consent of the CDCS that has the responsibility of care and supervision of the child you wish to adopt for the court proceedings, unless the court finds that their consent is not necessary to serve the best interests of the child.

### Adoption Petition Filing

If you are an Indiana resident, you may file your adoption petition in the county where you reside, in the county where the child resides, or in the county where the private agency (LCPA) or Department of Child Services (DCS) has custody of the child. If you are not an Indiana resident, you may petition to adopt a child who is a ward of Indiana in the county where the LCPA or DCS has custody or the county where the child resides.

If you are married, both you and your spouse must sign the adoption petition. Partners of an unmarried couple may not petition to adopt together and in such cases, only one partner may be the petitioner.

### Adoption Filing Fees

The adoption filing fee consists of the following: The adoption history fee, which is \$20 and the putative father registry fee, which is \$50, both of these fees are sent to the State Department of Health for records maintenance; and the county clerk's office fee, which can range from \$100 to \$200. The court may not require payment of the clerk's fee if you are unable to pay it based on an affidavit regarding your income and expenses.

### Adoption Assistance

Some of the children in the Indiana Adoption Program are eligible for the Federal Adoption Assistance Program. This can provide a monthly payment and Medicaid for the child after adoption. The child's social worker or your attorney can help you apply for the adoption assistance program. If adoption assistance is denied, you may request an administrative appeal and at the hearing, you may choose to represent yourself or have your attorney represent you. If adoption assistance is granted, you may choose to enter into a contractual agreement with the Department of Child Services to receive the assistance, which requires periodic certification. The assistance may continue until the adopted child reaches the age of 18 and may be extended to age 21 if the DCS determines that your child's physical, mental or emotional disabilities warrant an extension. The assistance must be requested in your adoption petition and is ordered by the court.

### County Adoption Subsidy

Adoption assistance may be available through the county DCS for families adopting some children with special needs. County subsidy may include a monetary payment and reimbursement for medical and related expenses due to a pre-existing physical, mental or emotional condition of the child. County subsidy cannot be denied on the basis of your income. The subsidy must be requested in your adoption petition and is ordered by the court. A child may be eligible to receive both adoption assistance and county subsidy.

to movies gets along well with others going to school responsible

## Adoption Chart

There are four basic types of adoption: public agency adoption, domestic private agency adoption, international adoption, and independent adoption. As the chart below shows, requirements, costs, and timing vary between and within the different types of adoption. To decide which type of adoption is best for you, think seriously about the type of child you would like to adopt (for example, an infant, an older child or group of siblings, a child from another country, a child who has special needs, etc.).

Type of Adoption	Definition	Children Available	Approximate Cost	Who Can Adopt	How Long It Takes
<b>Public agency adoption</b>	an adoption directed and supervised by a state or local Department of Human Services (or Social Services, or Human Resources, or Health and Welfare, or Child and Family Services, etc.)	children with special needs (kids who are harder to place due to emotional or physical disorders, age, race, membership in a sibling group, backgrounds); rarely infants	from \$0 to \$1,500 (depending on the state, up to \$1,500 of "nonrecurring" adoption costs for eligible special needs children may be reimbursed)	flexible eligibility requirements for adoptive parents; on a case-by-case basis, will consider single parents, parents over the age of 40, parents who have other children, parents with low incomes, etc.	starts slowly, but for those who have an updated home study, placement can occur as soon as a few months after selecting a child
<b>Private agency adoption</b>	an adoption directed and supervised by a privately funded, licensed adoption agency	sometimes handle special needs children; more commonly associated with younger children and infants	\$6,000 to \$25,000; lower for special needs children; some agencies have sliding fee scales	agencies may recruit parents based on race, religious affiliation, etc.; for infant adoptions, birth mother often chooses	a few months to a few years (sometimes longer for infant adoption)
<b>International adoption</b>	process of adopting a child who is not a U.S citizen, which may be accomplished privately through an attorney, or through an international adoption agency	about 88 countries currently allow their children to be adopted by U.S. citizens—6 countries in Africa, 20 in Asia, 32 in Europe, and 30 in Latin America; ages range from infant to teens; health conditions vary generally infants	\$7,000 to \$30,000 (varies by country; travel and travel-related expenses may be additional)	depends on agency and country requirements; some will accept single parents, most prospective parents are between 25 and 45 years old	six months to several years depending on the child's age and health, and the country's political climate
<b>Independent adoption (not legal in all states; also known as private adoption)</b>	an adoption initiated by prospective adopters and completed with help from an attorney or adoption counselor		\$5,000 to \$40,000 (includes prospective parents' cost of finding a birth mother, certain birth mother expenses, and attorney's fees)	birth mothers typically choose the adoptive parent — preferences tend to run toward younger, affluent, married couples	variable; as long as it takes to find a birth mother who will see the process through to finalization

Reprinted by permission from the North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC)

## What is adoption?

Adoption is meant to establish a legally recognized, lifelong relationship between a parent and child who are not parent/child related biologically. The adoptive parent(s) becomes legally and morally responsible for the child's safety, education, health care, value development, development of life skills, as well as the day-to-day care of that child.

Our society acknowledges that the man and woman who biologically create a life are traditionally the ones responsible for the child. Our society created adoption as a means to meet the needs of children whose biological parents are not able to assume the responsibilities of parenting.

Originally, adoption laws were based on "ownership"-type principles and focused on the rights of adults. However, over time, laws have become much more focused on meeting the emotional, physical, spiritual and developmental needs of the child.

In the past, *the two people who biologically gave them life raised most children*. This is no longer the case in our country. Today, single parents, grandparents, stepparents, foster parents or other parents acting as guardian are parenting a majority of children. Many children are now experiencing what it is like to have multiple sets of parents, grandparents and extended families. It is common for a child to experience a series of adults functioning in parental roles in their family.

Children who are adopted always have at least two sets of parents. For these children to be able to understand who they are, it is important for them to come to know, at some level, each of the parents who have had a part in creating the life they are living. All children try to make sense of these complex relationships. The more they know about the people to whom they have had any type of parental tie, the more successful they will be at developing a more complete picture of themselves.

According to Vera Fahlberg, a child and family expert and author, we can divide the parenting role in a child's life into three parts. Part One, ***the Biological Aspect of Parenting*** gives life itself to a child. The biological parent also determines the sex of the child, eye color, hair color and texture, intellectual potential, temperament, potential talents as well as some of the medical conditions that may surface as the child develops. Racial and ethnic heritage are also determined by the biological factors.

Part Two, ***the Legal Aspect of Parenting*** is financially responsible for the child. It is the legal parent's responsibility to keep the child safe and secure. The legal parent makes all important decisions for the child, for instance, deciding where the child will live, what school the child will attend, what medical care is given, etc. This parent is also legally and financially responsible for the child's actions.

Part Three, ***the Parenting Aspect of Parenting*** sees to the day-to-day care of the child. This parent is responsible for providing love and discipline. This parent models behavior for the child to copy. This is the person who cooks meals, washes clothes, helps with school work, takes care of the ill child, watches the child's ball game etc. This person is the child's primary educator who teaches values, religion, and most life skills.

For any child, it would be much easier to understand life if the same one or two people filled all three of these parental roles throughout the child's entire life. For many children, and all adopted children, multiple people are involved. Most children are able to do quite well with multiple "parents" as long as transitions are handled appropriately and the child has someone to talk with about the changes. In fact, many very successful adults credit their success to having had many parent models and mentors along the way.

Circumstances and the legal system may change who provides two of these three parts of parenting to a particular child. However, circumstances and the legal system cannot change the biological connection. **The child's bonds to the biological parents are permanent and important to whom that child is as a person.** Anyone planning to adopt a child needs to recognize and value this fact.

Recognizing this is the only way that you will be able to understand the identity questions that the child will wrestle with as they grow and mature. The adoptive parent, who assumes both the role of legal parent and parenting parent for their adoptive child, can help them reach their highest potential by helping the child deal with such issues.

In a legal sense, people become a member of a family in one of three ways: by birth, by marriage or by adoption. "Family" is defined in our legal structure as two or more people who: 1) have biological ties; or 2) make a long-term legally binding commitment to each other.

When entering a family by birth, the child shares genetics as well as cultural and ethnic heritage with others in the family.

When entering a family through adoption or marriage, family members blend themselves emotionally with another person or persons who usually differ in genetics and heritage. There generally is no biological tie. However, governments and societies have developed ways to recognize the great importance and permanence of such deep, emotional commitments.

Laws, regulations and practices have been developed to give persons related by adoption and marriage comparable rights and responsibilities as those related by birth. Our society expects all families, whether formed by birth, adoption or marriage, to be permanent connections that offer love, acceptance and support for all members.

## Where Do I Start Learning?

Ask adoptive parents where they started their adoption journey and you will get many answers. For some their process began with reading a newspaper or magazine article. Maybe they found adoption material on the Internet. They may have checked out a book on adoption from their local library. Others may have known someone who had already adopted and talked with them about expectations and what steps to take. Others may have looked in the phone book for adoption agencies in their area, then called and received basic information, either on the phone or in the mail.

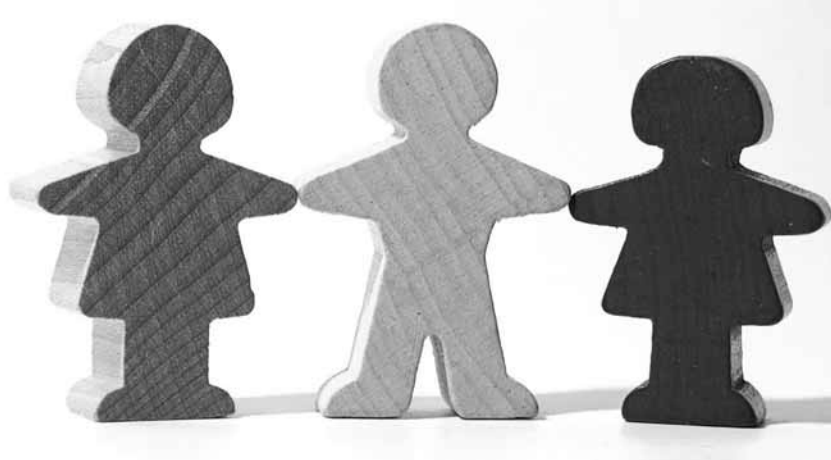
The more information you have, the better choices you can make for yourself and your children-to-be. Individuals must choose for themselves when and how to gather the information they need.

to movies gets along well with others going to school responsible

# NEW!

## Youth Connections Program

The Department of Child Services (DCS) works with teens that are ages 14 through 18 for whom an adoptive family has not been identified or who have expressed that they do not want to be adopted; but the youth need a caring adult in their life to help them make the transition to adulthood.



The Youth Connections Program has been implemented to assist teens who will be on their own when they leave foster care. Every young person aging out of foster care should have at least one caring adult in their life whom they can count on to be there for them when they need support, guidance, advice and resources.

What can you do? Consider that a teen on their own will need someone to talk to; for advice or a sympathetic ear or to celebrate a birthday, they may need help finding a job, finishing school, or locating a safe place to live, a place to do laundry or use the telephone, a ride to work, an occasional meal, some emergency cash, they may need a coat or someone to advocate for them.

Youth Connections Program Specialists will provide support to the adults and teens to help build and sustain a relationship that will nurture a long-term connection. They will assist in identifying Independent Living services and community resources for the teen.

To find out how you can help and to receive further information on the program, please contact one of the people listed below, nearest to your own location.

**Julia Deckard**

Southern Indiana YCP Specialist  
Youth Connections Program  
Department of Child Services  
812-895-3585 ext. 206  
julia.deckard@dcs.in.gov

**Barbara A. Gainer**

Youth Connections Programs  
Department of Children Services  
101 West Superior Street, Suite A  
Kokomo, Indiana 46901  
765-457-8218 (Work)  
765-459-5920 (Fax)  
Barbara.Gainer@dcs.in.gov



# Special Needs Adoption Area Specialist Locator Map

## Thank you for your interest in Indiana's Adoption Program.

This map shows the Special Needs Adoption Program (SNAP) specialist who coordinates adoption information for their Team.

The counties are divided into six Teams.



### Statewide

Ann Arvidson  
Pre/Post Adoption Services  
(317) 234-4500  
Central Office  
402 W Washington St. Rm W364  
Indianapolis, IN 46204  
Email: [ann.arvidson@dcs.in.gov](mailto:ann.arvidson@dcs.in.gov)

### North West

Juanita Bass  
(219) 881-2043  
Lake County DCS  
P.O. Box 2270  
661 Broadway  
Gary, IN 46409  
Email: [juanita.bass@dcs.in.gov](mailto:juanita.bass@dcs.in.gov)

### North East

Krysta Young  
(260) 458-6498  
Allen County DCS  
201 E. Rudisill Avenue  
Ft. Wayne, IN 46806  
Email: [krysta.young@dcs.in.gov](mailto:krysta.young@dcs.in.gov)

### West Central

Denise Halliburton  
(317) 232-4415  
Central Office  
402 W. Washington St., Rm. W364  
Indianapolis, IN 46204  
Email: [denise.halliburton@dcs.in.gov](mailto:denise.halliburton@dcs.in.gov)

### East Central

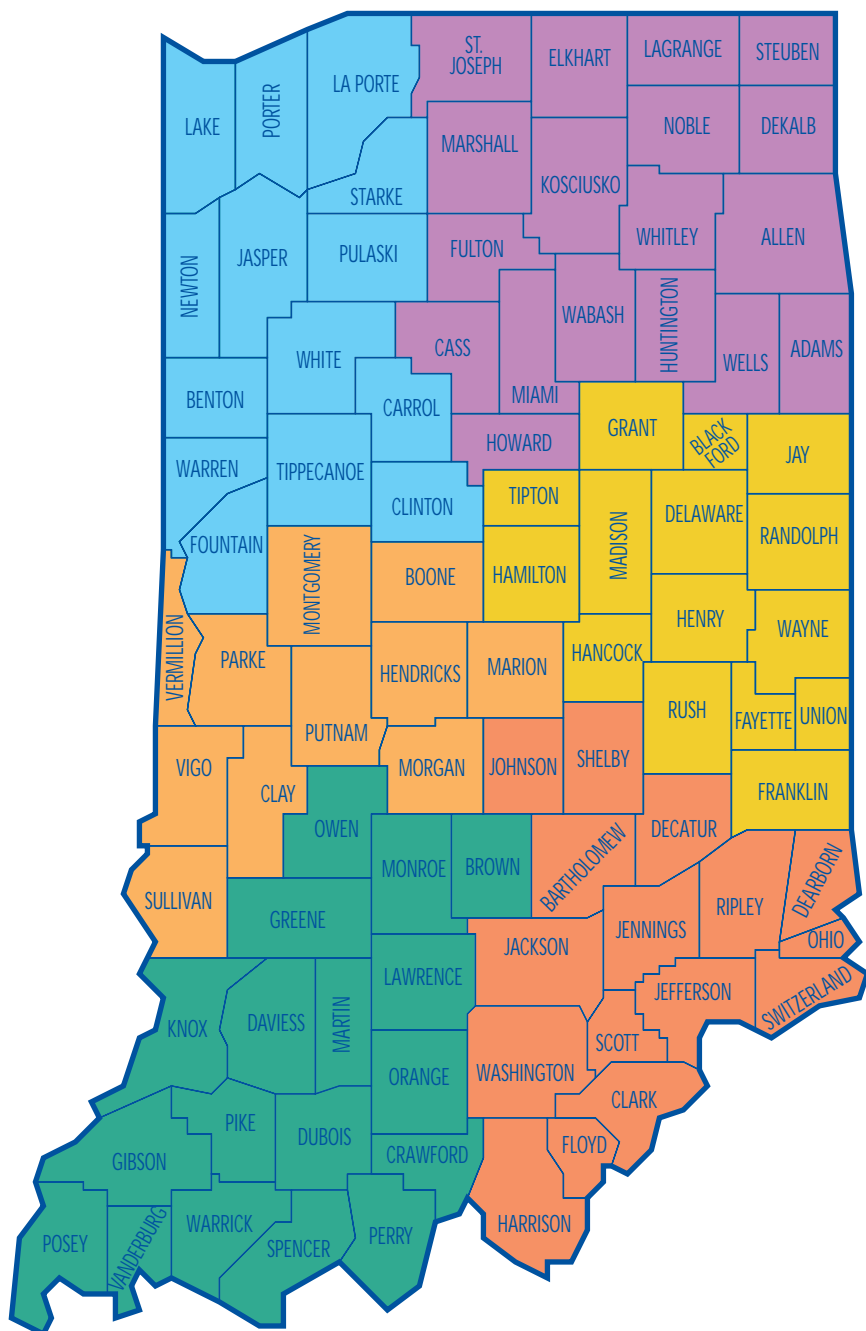
Marty Ogden  
(812) 663-6768 ext. 254  
Decatur County DCS  
1025 E. Freeland Rd. Ste. B  
Greensburg, IN 47240  
Email: [marjorie.ogden@dcs.in.gov](mailto:marjorie.ogden@dcs.in.gov)

### South East

Beth Dillon  
(317) 738-7113  
Johnson County DCS  
1784 E. Jefferson St.  
Franklin, IN 46131  
Email: [elizabeth.dillon@dcs.in.gov](mailto:elizabeth.dillon@dcs.in.gov)

### South West

Denise Bates  
(812) 424-6013  
Vanderburgh County DCS  
100 Sycamore Street  
P.O. Box 154  
Evansville, IN 47701-0154  
Email: [denise.bates@dcs.in.gov](mailto:denise.bates@dcs.in.gov)



Protecting our Children,  
Families & Future.

James W. Payne, Director



The Indiana Adoption Program  
c/o IFCAA  
509 E. National Ave., Ste. A  
Indianapolis, IN 46227

[www.adoptachild.in.gov](http://www.adoptachild.in.gov)

1-888-25-ADOPT

*Subscription information  
is available in this book on  
page 3.*



Opening hearts. Changing lives.  
enjoys playing with trains personable teen known to be shy going to

The Indiana Adoption Program  
c/o IFCAA  
509 E. National Ave., Ste. A  
Indianapolis, IN 46227

NONPROFIT ORG.  
U. S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
Indianapolis, IN  
Permit No. 5677